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THE
LIFE & WORKS
OF
ANDRE-FRANCOIS BOUREAU-DESLANDES

J. L. CARR

GLASGOW

1954

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Extract Ph. D. thesis

The Life and Works of André-François Boureau-Deslandes

In addition to professional eighteenth-century "philosophers", like Voltaire and Diderot, it is necessary to consider thinkers of secondary importance, who combined the quest of truth and the promotion of social well-being with a routine occupation, and whose activities represent a valuable contribution to the Enlightenment. On such person was André-François Boureau-Deslandes (1689-1757), commissaire de la marine and author of a number of significant works, including an early and challenging exposition of Newtonian scientific method, an historically notable account of British life in the reign of Queen Anne, one of the first examples of the conte philosophique which was to influence Diderot and Condillac, an outspoken plea for restoration of France's naval and economic strength, and, in condemnation of the abuse of luxury, a treatise which anticipates a trend generally associated with the second half of the eighteenth century. A number of hitherto unknown MSS sources supply information about the author's life and writings, and moreover furnish an unpublished work which we attribute to Deslandes. Above all, however, it is as composer of the first history of philosophy to be written in French that the latter is to be remembered. Certainly the Histoire critique de la philosophie was his strongest claim to recognition in his own century; and the great Encyclopédie of 1751 sqq., and the philosophic works of Helvétius and La Mettrie are in different ways and in varying degrees indebted to the four volumes that appeared in 1737-56. Yet it is our

contention that, being intended for the ever-growing reading public, whose good behaviour could be guaranteed only if the majority of citizens continued to respect certain Christian beliefs, this critical history does not at first sight represent our author's true opinions, which may be discovered only after careful study of the critical methods employed. Furthermore we insist that only in this way may the reader resolve apparent contradictions within the magnum opus, and between that work and writings intended for an initiated élite. Conclusions drawn after this reconciliation has been accomplished are that secretly the commissaire was an Epicurean deist; that consequently the basis of his thought was a paganism attributable in part to education at a Jesuit college; and that the god he worshipped was in fact Nature in all her aspects. Thus the "minor Voltaire" who divided his "philosophic" leisure between poetry, science, philosophy, religion, history, economics and politics, was essentially a pantheist, who, like many of his Epicurean and Gassendist forbears and friends, had resolved always to "live according to Nature".

PREFACE

"Ce n'est pas le prince des philosophes qu'André-François Boureau-Deslandes", wrote Verdun Saulnier in 1949 (Rev. univ., Nov-Dec., p. 271). The fact is undeniable; yet it does not excuse neglect of a writer who is thus judged less "princely" than the bearers of names which readily spring to mind when we consider eighteenth-century France. For, just as the present-day writer of history is clear-sighted enough not to restrict the survey of an era to royal personages, so also the modern historian of ideas is bound to pay attention to figures of secondary importance. Indeed, it is because - long before Monsieur Saulnier noticed the existence of Boureau-Deslandes - we had considered the latter's contribution to the literature of the eighteenth century to be of real significance, that the present study was undertaken under the initial guidance of Mornet and Hazard. There are many reasons why Deslandes could not become a "prince" amongst "philosophers", not the least of which is to be discovered in his professional career; and, in the pages that follow, we shall examine the life and works of one who, for more than thirty years, was actively engaged in a routine occupation. This fact alone is sufficient to distinguish our author from the literary "giants" of his age - from Voltaire and Diderot, for example, who had more freedom to compose and to criticize, because they had more time to devote to their writings and fewer official fetters. Yet, whilst a dual allegiance to the Navy and to a literary vocation explains an output which, of necessity, is smaller than that of the authors we have mentioned, and accounts in part for the limited notoriety achieved by a person in the full-time service of His Majesty, such restrictions on time and freedom of expression are not so noticeable as to justify almost total neglect. The works of Deslandes, which would amply fill a shelf of an ordinary book-case, are found to comprise

a challenging exposition of Newtonian method at a time when France was by no means converted from Cartesian scientific ideas, an original survey in the native tongue of the history of thought and culture that had hitherto been treated only in Latin, an early example of a new literary genre which Voltaire was to adopt with singular success, an historically significant plea for restoration of French power on the high seas at a moment when Britain and Holland were making much show of naval strength, and a precursory treatise in condemnation of luxury. Nor were these volumes without effect upon the eighteenth century itself. If he consults our list of Deslandes's works, the reader will immediately perceive the impressive number of editions which many of them were to have before the Revolution, and as he reads our study he will learn how Diderot and his colleagues imitated and even plagiarized a "poor relation".

From the originality we claim for Deslandes himself we turn to our own. Here is an author who is very rapidly dealt with in most biographical and bibliographical works; whose contribution to the history of thought has been noted only occasionally and briefly by such writers as Mornet, Morize and Hubert; and to whom in the present century only the article to which we referred at the outset has been devoted. This regrettable state of affairs we shall try to remedy in the pages that follow; for, not content with presenting the man and his works, we shall offer such an interpretation as will enable the reader to resolve perplexities arising out of deliberate contradictions and obscurities. At the same time we propose (particularly in the notes to Part I, and in section I b) of the Bibliographical Appendix) to amend a number of long-standing biographical and bibliographical errors; and we shall draw attention to MSS and letters of which the learned public has so far been ignorant. Yet, since the whole thesis is not longer than a single volume of Deslandes's principal work, and since it is clearly impossible completely to cover the forty years' literary production of a writer as ver-

satile as Deslandes, it will be necessary to sacrifice certain things. For instance, we have decided to leave aside the author's efforts in vindication of his father's professional reputation, and we shall be obliged to devote to scientific and economic writings less space than we shall allow for the examination of philosophic works. For it is above all the basic ideology of Deslandes that we hope to discover in our conclusions.

Before we can appreciate his ideas, however, we must know how he came to acquire them. First of all, then, we intend to consider the author himself - his birth and parentage, his family and early experiences, his formal education, his professional career as a member of the delegation to London in 1712-13 and as <u>commissaire de la marine</u> in two ports of the realm, his supplementary activities as correspondent of the Académie des Sciences, his trials and tribulations and his altercations, professional and private, his years of retirement in the French capital. This is a necessary preamble to our survey of the writings, in that our investigation would be capricious if it did not take account of the sequence of interests in the years 1712-56. Yet the reader will find an arrangement dictated by logical as well as chronological factors! The biography ranks as Part I; Part II is concerned with topics closely dependent upon the former, since our author's early philosophic inclinations can be explained only against the background of Parisian influences. But the circles he probably frequented in the French capital were related to <u>coteries</u> that had existed but recently in London, where the young naval executive was to spend the winter of 1712 and the spring of 1713. Consequently Part III deals with the way in which British influences impinged upon the mind of the young traveller - influences that not only prompted him to re-assert his appreciation of the hedonist ideal, but were also effective in forming the Newtonian scientist, the deist, and (as we shall see) the economist and political theorist.

The end of this third part brings us to the important years 1736-37, when scientific Newtonianism was conjoined with a form of deism associated in part with British thought. Parts IV-VI, concerned as they are with Deslandes's mature philosophy, constitute the substantial "core" of our study. To the best of his ability the writer has learned his "trade"; he has established his claim to consideration: and he has learned an ingenious method of presentation. As this is a dual method, this central portion of our work falls into two categories: Parts IV-V deal with the Histoire critique de la philosophie as a history of philosophy and as a critical history; but Part VI introduces the reader to a different type of writing, in which caution is apparently thrown aside, and in which we profess to be able to discover a great deal about the author's real opinions. Now, La Fortune, which we shall treat last of all in this sixth part, has a marked political content and flavour. It reminds us, therefore, that there are "philosophic" fields adjacent to the one we have been surveying, and which it is appropriate that we should next explore. Thus Part VII presents several allied subjects to which Deslandes turns his attention in middle and old age - economics, the composition and functions of history, politics and government. But the comprehensive review of the more specifically philosophic opinions has still to be made. Thus Part VIII not only embodies vital conclusions, but serves as a final synthesis of our author's ideas. Expressed as briefly as possible, that is the plan of the present work.

A few preliminary remarks about definitions are necessary before the reader proceeds to the text. Throughout this work, when we use the terms philosophe or "philosopher", we mean to distinguish them from the formally accepted sense of the word. These special designations apply to an eighteenth-century conception which we define thus: a man who tends to seek the unity of knowledge; who is systematic in method, but not opposed to modifying his theories and hypotheses to accord

with newly discovered data; who acknowledges the limits of the human intellect; who does not prize learning for its own sake, but rather for the sake of ultimate benefits for mankind; who employs his reason not for the sake of rationalizing, but principally in order to find explanations of the nature of things - explanations independent of tradition, superstition and mysticism; who seeks truth above all things and in all domains, and who bends his energies to the gradual propagation of truth; who loves society and ever keeps before him the ideal of the honnête-homme. On the other hand, when we use the words Philosophe or "Philosopher", we refer to a member of the Philosophic Party associated with the Encyclopédi of 1751 sqq.. Secondly, we have used the word "Nature" in many senses, some of which may not appear to be precise. This is unfortunately unavoidable. "Sir Leslie Stephen has said that 'Nature is a word contrived in order to introduce as many equivocations as possible into all the theories, political, legal, artistic and literary, into which it enters'. An American scholar has recently distinguished sixty different senses of the term" (Willey, "The Turn of the Century", in Seventeenth-Century Studies, O.U.P., 1938, p. 373). Whilst we cannot hold out the hope that we shall furnish a set of distinctions comparable with those of our transatlantic colleague, we request that the reader should wait until our Conclusions before demanding definitions of this "equivocal" term, as much abused by Deslandes as by the majority of his contemporaries.

Finally, we gladly acknowledge that, in documenting and arranging this work, we have been indebted to the late Paul Hazard of the Collège de France; to Daniel Mornet of the Sorbonne; to Alan M. Boase and other colleagues at Glasgow University; to the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Mazarine and the Arsenal; to the British Museum and the Royal Society; to the archivists of the Ministères des Affaires Etrangères and La France d'Outre-Mer, of the Département de la Seine,

the Académie des Sciences, the Archives Nationales, the Marine Française, the ports of Brest and Rochefort and the Département de Finistère, and of the towns of Pondichéry , Brest, Rochefort, La Rochelle and Metz.

J.L. CARR
GLASGOW, 1954

Gilles Martin ("épicier de Paris") = Péronne Gosselin (extra-marital union without adultery)

François Martin (1634-1706) = Marie Cuperly (d. 1711)

Guillaume Cuperly ("marchand de Paris")

Agnès = Michel Desprez

Marguérite = Jacques Lauriau

Marie-Françoise (1665-1697) = (1)

Simon Mouffle = Elizabeth Demonchers

Marie-Marguérite = Barthélemy Mouffle de la Tuillerie (d. 1753) (2)

Marie-Anne (d. 1772) = Aymard-Félicien (3) Boffin de la Sône (d. 1771)

Noël-Félicien Boffin de la Sône ("seul hériter des cinq Deslandes")

André-François (1689-1757)

François-Louis (1690-1752)

Jacques Boureau ("marchand bourgeois de Tours") = Marguérite Collinet

André Boureau-Deslandes (1655-1707)

Joseph Boureau de la Brosse

Magdelaine ("religieuse")

Marguérite = Grenier

Marguérite (b. 1692, "morte en bas âge")

Louis (b. 1693? d. before 1742)

Marie-Françoise (b. 1694 "morte en bas âge")

Joseph (1695-1742)

Marguérite (1697-1711)

Note (1) date of marriage 1686 (2) ditto 1703 (3) ditto 1745

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Letter of 1717

J'ai reçu, Monsieur, avec un extreme plaisir la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'ecrire le 30.e de juin. elle m'asseure de la continuation de votre amitié, et vous savez que j'en ai toujours fait un cas infini.

Je vous envoye le Memoire dont je vous ai parlé sur la maniere de jauger les vaisseaux. je l'ai composé par ordre de Monsieur le Mareschal D'Estrées, et il m'en a paru fort content. je souhaite que vous en soyez aussi satisfait, et je vous prie de le lire a l'academie des sciences. personne, à ce que je crois, n'a encore traité cette matiere comme je l'ai fait si je ne suis fort trompé. si on la peut traiter autrement. mandez-moi ce que vous en pensez. et ce qu'en pense l'academie.

mie. car le Conseil de Marine pourra bien sur mon Memoire etablir une maniere, une maniere uniforme de jauger les Vaisseaux dans tout le Royaume.

Mes complemens, s'il vous plait, a Mrs de Fontenelle, Varignon, Lagny, Nicolle, Terrasson &c.

Je suis avec une estime sincere et un attachement inviolable, Monsieur, Votre tres humble et tres obeissant serviteur

H. Renaud

De Brest ce 21.e juillet 1717.

Chronological Summary

1689 (mid)	birth at Bandel
1697 Feb.	mother's death
1701 Feb.	departure for France
1702-08 (app.)	Collège Louis-le-Grand
1706 Dec.	death of François Martin
1707 Oct.	death of father
1708-11 (app.)	naval school at Rochefort
1710 Feb.	share of Fr. Martin's fortune
1710-12 (app.)	Paris. Testamentary matters
1712 Nov.	settlement of father's estate. Inherits naval office: "élève" of Académie des Sciences
1712	Réflexions sur les grands hommes &c.
1712-13	mission to England
1713 May	probably visited Royal Society in London
1713	Poetae Rusticantis Litteratum Otium
1713	Engl. tr. of Réflexions
1713 Jul.	back in France
1713 Aug.-Oct.	correspondence with Desmaizeaux
1713-14	Paris. Probable contact with salons
1714	naval appointment in Brest
1714	augm. ed. of Réflexions
1714-19 (app.)	MSS extract of Burnet's Sacred Theory & Doubts
1715	L'Art de ne point s'ennuyer
1715	father's letters of nobility annulled
1716	"adjoint géomètre supernuméraire" of Acad. des Sc., begins regular corresp. Commissaire de la marine
1717	Le Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre
1717 Aug.	submits method of jaugeage
1720-23	corresp. with Réaumur
1720	Mairan & Varignon commissioned to find standard method of jaugeage
1722	ed. of Poetae Rusticantis &c
1724	decision re. jaugeage: Deslandes disappointed
1724	L'Art de ne point s'ennuyer tr. Engl.
1725	another ed. of this Engl. tr.
1729-31	corresp. with the Abbé Bignon
1732	ed. of Réflexions

1736	Commissaire-général in Rochefort
1736	Recueil de différens traités &c.
1736	quarrel concerning Réaumur
1737	L'Histoire critique de la philosophie (3 vols.)
1739 Jun.	given charge of détail at Rochefort
1739 Sep.	member of Acad. des Sc. &c at La Rochelle
1739 Oct.	Letanduere protests about his administration
1740 (app.)	resigns from Acad. des Sc. in Paris
1741	ed. of Poetae Rusticantis &c. in Amus. du coeur & de l'esprit
1741	ed. of Histoire critique &c.
1741	Pigmalion, ou la statue animée
1742 Mar.	this work condemned to be burned by Parlt. de Dijon
1742	ed. of Histoire critique &c.
1742	ed. of Pigmalion
1742	request for renewal of father's letters of nobility in his favour. Evidently rejected
1742	L'Optique des moeurs &c.
1743	Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce. Displeased Court. Engl. tr. same year
1743	ed. of Pigmalion
1744	ed. of Pigmalion
1745	another Engl. tr. of Réflexions &c.
1745	Lettre sur le luxe &c.
1745	financial difficulties: debt with Lefèvre
1745	Mon Cabinet
1746 Nov.	relieved of post of ordonnateur in Rochefort
1746 Dec.	quits service and requests continuance of emoluments for life
1747 Jan.	sells more goods and effects. In Paris, sends promissory note to Lefèvre
1747	Valois's Entretiens. Deslandes criticized
1748	Lettre de Monsieur D*** à Monsieur ****, Trésorier de France
1748	Essay sur la marine des Anciens. Dispute with Mairan
1748	ed. of Recueil de différens traités &c. Member of Acad. de Berlin
1749 Apr.	apology to Mairan
1749	L'Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat
1750	ed. of Recueil de différens traités &c.
1750	Traité des différens degrés de la certitude morale
1751	La Fortune, histoire critique
1752	Lettre critique sur l'Histoire navale d'Angl.

1752	ed. of Poetae Rusticantis &c.
1752	ed. of Valois's Entretiens: further criticisms of Deslandes
1753	ed. of Recueil de différens traités &c.
1753	ed. of Pigmalion
1755	ed. of Réflexions &c.
1756	L'Histoire de Monsieur Constance
1756	ed. of L'Histoire critique de la philosophie (4 vols.)
1757 Apr.	act of abjuration. Death and interment (St. Eustache, Paris)
1758	ed. of Réflexions &c
1758 Dec.	Réflexions &c. placed on Index
1768	ed. of Essay sur la marine des Anciens
1776	ed. of Réflexions &c.
1786	ed. of L'Histoire critique de la philosophie

CONTENTS

PART I

THE LIFE OF DESLANDES

CHAPTER I INDIA

C'est des Indiens, ou plûtôt des Orientaux en général, que sont venus les prosternemens, les génuflexions, les divers panchemens de tête & du corps; enfin toutes les marques exterieures de respect & de déférence. Ces marques ont passé peu à peu dans l'Occident... (H.c., I, 98).

When, in January 1686, the French vessel La Royale, recently arrived in the port of Soualis near Surat, was met by a small boat bearing Director François Martin of the French East India Company, the occasion must certainly have been one of emotional tension for Madame Martin, who with her daughter Marie had made the long journey from France to join her now famous husband after a separation of some twenty years.[1] And for the young lady of twenty or twenty-one, who had never known her father personally, this moment was surely the culmination of years of anxious speculation and wondering. But, exciting as undoubtedly was this first meeting with her father, Marie was soon to be involved in events of even greater importance and her emotions were to be stirred by something even more momentous. The Director presented his daughter to his most respected agent, André Bourcau-Deslandes,[2] whom he had persuaded to remain in India instead of returning to France.[3] Very soon the young man of thirty-one was visibly captivated by the charm of Marie, and during the three weeks in Surat the couple spent more and more time in each other's company. Thus it was not surprising that, early in February, Monsieur Deslandes approached the Director with a view to marrying his daughter; or that, having already such a good opinion of the suitor, François Martin consented to the union which took place at the end of February 1686. On 1st May, the newly-married couple sailed with the Martins for Pondichéry, where Martin was to have his new head-quarters, and where they finally disembarked at the end of the month.

It was in Pondichery that the first child of the marriage, Marie-Marguérite, was born on 20th November 1686. But, when only twenty months old, this baby passed into the care of her grand-parents, for on 30th August 1688 her parents set off for Bengal to found a trading-post in the district known as "Ougly" (Hooghly), where they arrived probably about the middle of September.[4] At first, of course, they had to find temporary accommodation. Thus for a time they settled in Bandel, a Portuguese area, where Marie was to give birth to her second child, André-François, sometime between April and October 1689.[5]

About this time preparations had been made for the building of a head-quarters for the new trading-post; so, in order to be near to the site of their new home, the Deslandes family removed into a house formerly occupied by English merchants.[6] In 1690 the new township of Chandernagore was founded by André Boureau-Deslandes, who had established the French trading-post as its nucleus. We may justifiably be curious regarding the aspect, appointments and general amenities of this <u>loge</u> in which André-François was to spend his infancy and early boyhood. Luillier, who visited Chandernagore in 1701, tells us something about its location and surroundings,[7] and Madame Gaebelé gives more details of the house and grounds. There was a large garden filled with roses and beds of polyanthus, surrounded by walls protecting not only the garden and the Deslandes family but also the warehouses of the Company. The house itself must have been of considerable beauty, with its great circular pergolas supported by classical columns and with a magnificent central chamber (the "King's Room") used for receptions and for meetings of the Company's council. Nearby (but outside the <u>loge</u> proper) were located the church of Notre Dame des Anges, served by Italians and half-caste Portuguese of the Augustinian order, the house of the doctor,

Quentin, and of Fonvielle, Clartière, Gomez and Patrix, officials of the Company. Nor must we overlook the presence of Jesuit missionaries who occupied a fine house in the township, for it was they who were to take charge of the education of the young French colonists.

Having taken a brief look at the house and its surroundings, we may profitably investigate some of the main differences between a childhood spent in Europe and that of André-François in Bengal. First, there was the climate which, early in 1690, laid low his father and many of the other pioneers with a severe attack of fever.[8] Lullier confirms that it was an unhealthy climate, which produced prickly heat and other forms of skin irritation, which were aggravated by the abundance of insects after the monsoon rains.[9] Secondly, there were many wild, and sometimes dangerous animals and reptiles - tigers, leopards, panthers, snakes and crocodiles. To offset this, however, there was abundance of animal food, from chickens to sheep, some of which were cheaper and some fatter than their European counterparts.[10] Thirdly, although the vine could not be cultivated in Bengal, there were plenty of vegetables, cereals,,fruit and honey.[11] From the point of view of diet, therefore, there was little to complain about.

But there were less tangible, and certainly more important aspects of this colonial up-bringing. Life on the banks of the holy river was bound to afford unique experiences. In other parts of the East it was possible to gaze across waters tinted by the sunset at strange varieties of craft with multicoloured sails plying up and down the silent river, but in few places was it possible to contemplate the spectacle of dying humans being brought down to the sacred waters and floated out into the current, once they had breathed their last. Indeed, in many ways Chandernagore was a unique vantage-point for observing the immense spirituality of oriental peoples. There were, for

example, two main religions in this part of the world: Mohammedanism, brought to the land by Mogul invasions and kept in full vigour by the "Moors"; and the Hindu cult, which was indigenous to the Gentils:

Les Maures sont Mahométans, & les Bengalistes sont Gentils. Tous les Gentils reconnoissent un premier Estre, & cette connoissance est si naturelle qu'il est impossible d'en pouvoir douter... Outre ce premier Estre, les Gentils adorent plusieurs Divinitez, qui sont toutes differentes de celles dont il est parlé dans l'Histoire Poëtique; ils adorent le Fleuve du Gange, une certaine Déesse qu'ils appellent Caltia... (Voy. e du Sieur Luillier, ed. 1706, pp. 65-66)

Indeed, it was an idol of this goddess which was:

...exposée à la vûë du public pendant un mois; pendant lequel tems chacun va lui faire des offrandes, les uns lui portent des cocis, les autres des fruits, les uns du poisson... Mais aprés que le tems de l'exposition est fini, cette Idole est promenée le long du Gange...(ibid., pp.66-67).

This curious ceremony too must have been witnessed by André-François during his boyhood. We have therefore to take into account the fact that he grew up to know - with varying degrees of intimacy - three religions, each of which numbered its devotees by millions. The Christian religion, learned in the form of catechism at his mother's knee or from the neighbouring Jesuits, was certainly his first contact with spirituality; but, since he happened to live in such a place, the peculiar rites and ceremonies of Hindus and Moslems are also to be reckoned with as part of his early experiences. Moreover, in the evolution of his personal beliefs, analogies between these cults must certainly have played their part. For example: the parading of an image of a female deity must have appeared to the mature Deslandes as a link between the idolatry of the Hindus and the superstitious devotion of pious Bretons amongst whom he spent so much of his adult life.

Then life in the settlement had other consequences, less agreeable for those involved and occurring as a result of the confused political situation in East and North-East India.

The French in their small trading-posts were hemmed in by hostile natives from whose princes they were constantly obliged to buy their immunity - princes who also made war with each other, to the great embarrassment and danger of the French colonists. In addition there were European rivals, and especially at this time the Dutch, who in 1693 took possession of Pondichéry. After a short internment in Batavia, the Martins (with Marie-Marguérite Deslandes) were allowed to proceed to Bengal to join the Deslandes, only to find, however, conditions similar to those they had come to know so well in Pondichéry, for soon Chandernagore was in a state of virtual siege. The reason for this was that several Rajahs had risen in revolt against the Mogul, and were creating armed encampments along the Ganges, with consequent danger to Europeans from undisciplined soldiery marauding in the district. Thus in 1697 trade was at a standstill, and Martin and Deslandes had to resort to borrowing money to keep the new trading-post in operation. Meanwhile two French ships were rotting in the Ganges, unable to leave port because of the Dutch blockade; and the French squadron, constantly expected to chase away the enemy, did not materialize. Now the lore was a fortress. Deslandes and his father-in-law had ditches dug and palissades erected around the outer walls, to which was added later a second series of fortifications. It was not until early in 1698 that some semblance of tranquillity was restored.

Meanwhile a few things of domestic importance had been happening to the Deslandes family. In the new Chandernagore were born six further children: François-Louis in 1690; Marguérite in 1692; in 1693 Louis; in the following year Marie-Françoise; in 1695 Joseph, and in 1697 a second Marguérite, the one born in 1692 having (like Marie-Françoise) died in the interim.[12] Of the Deslandes family it is certain that André-François and François-Louis were boarded out at a small Jesuit seminary, opened about 1697 by Tachard for

the children of French and Portuguese in Chandernagore;[13] and it is highly probable that, before the establishment of this school, they were instructed privately by Jesuit missionaries.

About this time the Deslandes family suffered irreparable loss. Her health weakened by successive confinements in an unfavourable climate, Madame Deslandes died in February 1697. Writing to another son-in-law, Desprez, about this sad event, François Martin gives this comment upon the character of the deceased:

> il est vray...qu'elle a esté pleurée amerement de toutes les personnes qui la connoissoient, Européans, Mores, et Gentils, et cette mort qui semble ne devoir êstre resentye que dans la famille a Esté Envisagée Icy comme une perte publique (Family papers, Arch. Seine, DQ[10] (Domaines) 739/23/133 - further refs. to these papers will omit general specification).

He further gives the impression that André Deslandes and his wife had led a happy, and indeed exemplary life together. Certainly, after this tragic loss, Deslandes could tolerate no longer his existence in Chandernagore; and, having erected over the tombs of his wife and those of his children who had died in infancy a tiny chapel (which he gave to the Jesuits on condition that they should officiate there each day),[14] he departed with his daughters Marie-Marguérite and the second Marguérite, and his sons André-François, François-Louis, Joseph and Louis. This forlorn relic of a happy family spent three weeks in Pondichéry with their grandparents before setting sail for France on February 22nd 1701 in the Philipeaux.

The first twelve years of the life of André-François have here been reviewed in some detail, first, because they represent a period about which little is known, and, secondly, because the influences that bore upon him before the age of twelve will be found to have affected his personality and outlook in later years. For instance: his lassitude in mature life may be partly attributed to the early effects of a hot and unhealthy climate; to the death rites on the

Ganges and to the premature demise of his mother and two of his sisters may be ascribed our author's obsession with questions of death and immortality; to the daily spectacles of three religious cults and ceremonials which, though in many respects quite different from each other, had none the less much in common, may be attributed a predisposition towards a kind of natural religion, which was later to be strengthened when he met deists in the flesh during his short stay in London. Finally, the stress which he later put upon the value of naval supremacy as a protection for commerce may have had its origins in the memory of disasters which fell upon the French colonists after 1693, and perhaps also to the opinions expressed by his father and grand-father during these unhappy months. In particular, the spectacle of French ships immobilized and rotting for lack of naval strength in Indian waters may have initiated his concern with the efficiency of the Marine.

CHAPTER II EDUCATION IN FRANCE

La grande habitude qu'il avoit contractée avec les Anciens, faisoit qu'il s'approprioit souvent leurs pensées (H.c., IV, 91).

a) The College in Paris

The young Deslandes, then aged twelve, arrived in France probably in the second half of 1701, and for a short period of about two years enjoyed the privilege of his father's company.

The fact that in India he had been educated by Jesuits is in itself evidence in favour of the supposition that, in Paris, he continued under their auspices. But this is slender proof; and, since his death, none of Deslandes's biographers appear to have mentioned the question of his education. Indeed, the only positive testimony on the matter is found in an early XVIIIth century work, and then only in a foot-note:

> ...Mr. Deslandes, Auteur des Réflexions sur les grands hommes, qui sont morts en plaisantant,...né dans les Indes, ...a fait ses Études à Paris, chez les Jésuites; &...est Commissaire de la Marine à Rochefort, ou à Brest (La Monnoye, Hist. de M. Bayle etc., ed. 1716, p. 442, n.).

"Educated in Paris by the Jesuits" - that is our first guide. But at which college? Some inferences may be drawn from details of the education of the brothers, François-Louis and Joseph. Madame Gaebelé records that the former "était au Collège Louis-le-Grand" in 1709; Sommervogel tells us that a Latin poem of Joseph, composed in 1715, was printed in a recueil of that college, where Joseph died in 1742; and the family papers indicate that it was there that Joseph made his profession in 1712 (Gaeb., p. 225; Sommervogel, Bibl. des Ecr. de la Cie. de J., art. Deslandes, Joseph; 739/22/18). It is thus not unreasonable to assume that André-François attended the same school. But that is not all: further evidence is furnished by the Latin and French poems of Deslandes, three of which are addressed to the teacher of Rhetoric

at the college, Noël-Etienne Sanadon,[15] for in these the poet describes himself as the sodalis of the Jesuit humanist and speaks with regret of the happy school-days that are now past. In this way the facts can be pieced together so convincingly that there is ample reason to conclude that our author was educated at the Collège Louis-le-Grand in Paris.[16]

This being so, what other facts emerge? In the first place, since the course of studies was normally of six years' duration and since Deslandes entered the naval school in 1703 (B. N. MSS, n.a.fr., 9354, fº 504, rº), it is likely that he was at Louis-le-Grand between 1702-08, and that he was therefore subjected to three rectors whose service covers this period: 1702-04, Le Picart; 1705, Le Tellier, future confessor to Louis XIV; 1706-08, Forcet. Secondly, as one of about a thousand pupils on the roll at that time - whose obedience and diligence were fostered by hope of reward rather than by fear of chastisement -[17] he would follow the Ratio Studiorum of the Jesuit order, consisting of a course of grammar lasting for three years, followed by a year devoted to the humanities and one to Rhetoric, and that, in addition, in the last two or three years, he would apply himself more and more to Philosophy and Science, with instruction and even conversation conducted in Latin (Compayré, I, Liv. I, Ch. I).[18] "Modern" studies were not, however, neglected at Louis-le-Grand, since Physics, Chemistry and Astronomy had a small but not insignificant place in the curriculum. More general aspects of the Ratio Studiorum and the Constitutions of the Jesuits affected the educational principles of the college. Compayré sums them up thus: first, the notion that instruction must necessarily have a lofty purpose and that therefore the whole purpose of enlightenment was moral utility. (In this we may perceive some basis for the differently founded utilitarianism of some of the "philosophers" of the XVIIIth century.) Secondly,

that "les Jésuites ne désirent pas l'instruction du peuple" - a statement for which he finds some support in the Constitutions, according to which it would be unwise for mere domestics to read or write. Frankly, he concludes, the Jesuits did not favour the education of the lower classes, who, provided they had enough instruction in the essentials of Christianity to be obediently orthodox, were regarded as knowing quite enough: "rassurés sur l'orthodoxie des classes inférieures, les Jésuites ne songent pas à travailler pour elles" (I, 171). It is the combined effect of these two aspects of the Constitutions that represents the origin of principles held in later life by men like Voltaire, Diderot and Deslandes, educated in Jesuit colleges (but - significantly- not by J-J Rousseau, who was not), namely, that, to ensure the moral well-being of the state as a whole, it is advisable to conceal "advanced" ideas from the plebs.

Out-of-class activities, such as debating-societies and discussions in the school gardens and the library, were encouraged as Louis-le-Grand. The latter place seems to have been a particularly valuable feature of college-life:

> Là, chacun courait où son goût le portait de préférence. Celui-ci voulait déchiffrer les vieux manuscrits, celui-là examinait les estampes et les médailles, un troisième s'arrêtait au cabinet d'histoire naturelle, d'autres étudiaient les mouvements de la sphère céleste, et suivaient sur le globe terrestre le progrès des missions. Ils considéraient avec avidité les objets curieux que les RR PP avaient envoyés des Indes et de la Chine. Ils pouvaient consulter les missionnaires nouvellement arrivés de l'Asie; ils rencontraient, suivant l'époque où ils se trouvaient au collège, Hardouin, Buffier, Germon, célèbre par sa polémique avec les bénédictins, Ménétrier, auteur d'ouvrages estimés sur la numismatique, Sanadon, Souciet, Tournemine, critique érudit, écrivain facile qui réussissait également en prose et en vers, Porée, le docte et spirituel Bougeant, Brumoy, traducteur du théâtre grec, et les autres savants de la compagnie qui se donnaient rendezvous à la bibliothèque (Emond, pp. 124-125).19

Indeed we must certainly not overlook the excellent arrangement by which Jesuits could lodge at the college, taking part in the corporate life and guiding the moral and aesthetic development of the young. Thus pupils met on intimate terms some of the leading literary and philosophic members of

the Society; and, in class or out, there were wonderful facilities for learning. For recreation too there was ample provision,[20] pupils being encouraged to take part in fencing, dancing, riding and other pursuits regarded as the proper accomplishments of the young nobleman. This fact indicates another aspect of life at the college, namely the presence there of sons of the nobility and even of reigning houses, who had enrolled in considerable numbers since the King had expressed his warm approval of the institution. Indeed, the relations between the school and Versailles were cordial and sustained, Monsieur often attending theatrical performances in which scions of the noblest families in France might be participating - sons of the Conti, Rohan, Soubise, Montmorency, Grammont, Luxembourg, Boufflers, Richelieu, D'Estrées, Créqui, Mortemart and Broglie families, for example, with whom scholars could find themselves on terms of familiarity,[21] either in Paris or in the school's country-house at Gentilly, whither they betook themselves at regular intervals to maintain a reputation for forming robust young bodies as well as well-stocked minds.

During Deslandes's school-days in the college certain events of significance took place, principal among which, was the jubilation which attended the birth in 1704 of a first son to the Duchess of Bourgogne, who had long hoped to provide the august sovereign with a great-grandson. This (like other court events of moment) was dutifully celebrated at Louis-le-Grand, first, with speeches made in the presence of the Cardinal d'Estrées, and, in the evening, with fireworks in the play-ground - a most memorable day in a schoolboy's life. Furthermore, great importance was attached to plays presented at prize-giving ceremonies. In August 1703 Deslandes may have witnessed Posthumius, dictator; in the following year Moyse; in 1705 Jonas;

and later in the same year Cyrus.' In 1706 he may well have been present, either on the stage or in the auditorium, at the performance of Adonais; and at the very end of his career at the college, Lucius Junius Brutus in August 1708 (Sommervogel, art. Paris).

We have glanced at the aspects of the education provided by the Jesuit college at which our author almost certainly received instruction and at the social life that accompanied it; and we have noted one or two events that occurred during the period of his attendance as Louis-le-Grand. We can now assert that Deslandes's education was amongst the best that could be had at the time - which means that it was scholarly without being scholastic, humanistic rather than pedantic. For even the critics of the Jesuit system could not deny that studies were relatively "advanced" at the college. There, for instance, Deslandes may even have acquired some notions of Newtonianism and certainly some insight into natural sciences, either in class or during entralled hours spent in that wonderful library with its many volumes and numerous pieces of apparatus which made it almost a cabinet des curieux. But they were "advanced" in more subtle ways too; and in general one can say that the Jesuits of Louis-le-Grand (if we may judge them by Voltaire and Deslandes) fashioned a standard of taste more concerned with graciousness and elegance than with the disciplined rigours of classical artistic criteria. Under the influence of salons of the day, the teachers themselves had turned from enthusiastic devotion to the Ancients, characteristic of such colleges in the XVIIth century, and were ever more attentive to current demands for a literature to give pleasure and add lustre to life. After being so long the jealously guarded inheritance of the erudite, taste had become a social virtue; and if literary works did not divert the reader they were judged dull. Some of the classics obviously fulfilled this condition; but, without

abandoning the rules of French classicism, the tutors of Voltaire and Deslandes were often attracted into the camp of the "Modernists", where they enrolled under the standard of La Motte and Fontenelle. Now Deslandes bears the imprint of this education. Although he has absorbed the philosophies of the Ancients and formed affections for those which anticipate modern notions of good taste, he rarely appeals to the artistic criteria of the Ancients. In the Art de ne point s'ennuyer, for instance, he is wholeheartedly in favour of those writers who are sincere in their opinions and those who write to please. In this last-named characteristic resides his own definition of taste. An author shows taste if he manages to please the most polite and refined members of intelligent society.

Of the teachers at the college between 1702-08, two only are mentioned explicitly in the writings of Deslandes - Sanadon and Buffier. But these two names are not without significance: here in the very midst of a Jesuit college were two men, one of whom represented potential rationalism and deism, the other hedonism and humanism. Buffier, a man of profoundly mathematical and logical tendencies and situated philosophically between Descartes and Locke, was so bent upon applying the sciences to religion that his writings are above all rationalistic (see Birch MSS 4283, fº 138, vº, for proof of Deslandes's intimacy with Claude Buffier, whose influence we shall discuss later). But more immediately it is the name of Noël-Etienne Sanadon that must come to the fore - Sanadon, a professed humanist, steeped in the Anachreontic[22] and Renaissance traditions which, despite his cloth, found expression in a pagan and hedonist appreciation of love and wine. Clearly there was a bond of fellowship between master and pupil. For example, it occurred naturally to the young Deslandes that, having recovered from a severe attack of small-pox, he should address a poem to his former teacher:

Chantre fameux, qui sur les pas d'Horace
Vas te placer au sommet du Parnasse,
Et dont les vers doux & mélodieux
Pourroient charmer le plus puissant des Dieux,
Lis cet Epitre & plains ma destinée. (in Reflex., ed. 1732 p. 150)

The rest of the poem generally keeps to the clichés of the genre. For instance, we may easily find in Sanadon's own poems (Carmina, p. 253) the hackneyed allusion to the Parcae found in these lines:

Hélas ! j'ai cru malade & languissant,
Voir les ciseaux de la Parque ennemie
Prêts à trancher une mourante vie. (ibid)

We note, moreover, the oxymoron " mourante vie" dragged in to ennoble a poem which none the less more than once degenerates into the prosaic. Here, in short, we have the French verse of an alumnus of the college anxiously trying to show his former teacher that he has remembered the mythology he learned in school, but in parts of the poem failing to sustain a high tone for lack of poetic genius.

Furthermore, in the Latin poems published in London in 1713, but collected between 1709-12 (ed. 1713, pp. 4 and 42),[23] we come upon two pieces addressed to the Jesuit father. The first recalls the publication by Sanadon in 1707 of verses dedicated to Queen Marie-Louise of Spain on the occasion of the birth of a child (Natali Stephani Sanadonis S.J. Carmina in Regalem partum Mariae Ludovicae Hispaniarum Reginae). The effusive commentary of Deslandes, which must be dated about 1707-08 and which is entitled In Regias S. Principis Asturiarum cunas à Natali Stephano Sanadone elucubratas, refers in these terms to the Rhetoric-master :

Eia perge pater dicacitatum
Perge Gallica regna seculumque
Ditare eximiis tuis libellis,
Qui vivent mage quam polus solumque.
At vives mage quam tui libelli:
Ergo tu mage quam polus solumque
Vives, o Sanado perite, vives. (Poet. Rust., ed. 1713, p. 31)

Thus it is a tribute, in conventional terms, to one whom he regards as the "father of repartee". This poem may well have been written in Paris in 1707, before Deslandes left to

study naval administration in Rochefort. At least, to support this assumption we note a change in tone between this cheerful eulogy and the mournful verses from the same volume entitled Ad N.S. Sanadon, Cum autor Runerfortii degeret. This time praise is tempered with regret:

Si te rustica nec lepore blando
Nec dulci Veneris nitens amictu,
Musa invisere gestiat peritum,
Tu qui flosculus es decusque vatum
Quos nunc Gallia mollicella nutrit,
Hanc ne temne, precor: precor, severi
Vultus exue judicis protervos.

This loss of confidence in his powers as a poet are explained more clearly in the lines that follow:

Non sum qualis eram tuus poëta,
Forsan candidulus politulusque,
Dulcem qui poteram invocare Phoebum,
Dulces qui poteram fovere Musas.

The poet professes to regard the Saintonge district as barbarian territory, and this becomes the main theme as the poem proceeds:

At nunc barbaricis gementi in oris
Non bellae Veneres Cupidinesque,
Non cohors tenera elegantiarum
Occursat mihi: nullus hic poëta
Et Phoebum colit & sacras Camoenas.

Here is yearning indeed for the Paris of his cultured masters and school-friends! Comparing his fate with that of Ovid amongst the Thracians, the poet begs his former tutor to send him the restorative of his elegant style:

Ergo candidulam tuum sodalem
Jucundâ refice adlocutione... (p. 32).

We do not know whether this plea was answered immediately or not, but it certainly establishes the influence of master over pupil. Indeed, the first edition of the Latin verses contained this "anonymous" tribute to the author:

Gaudete ô Charites, Cupidinesque:
Landesî aureolus libellus exit,
Quo non tersius, elegantiusque,
Nil lascivius est, proterviusque.
Nam, seu vitigeno ebrius liquore
Cantat munera Liberi parentis,
Seu pulchrae tenet osculis puellae,
Seu ridere juvat severiores
Insanae sapientiae magistros,

Totus perfluit Attico lepore,
Totus molliculo calescit aestu.
.....
Non blandus comitem sibi Catullus,
Non illum tener abnuat Tibullus,
Quo non blandior est Catullus ipse,
Non est ipse magis tener Tibullus.
Tantum denique vivat ille, quantùm
Vivetis, Charites, Cupidinesque. (pp. 40-41)

In later editions this was acknowledged to be the work of Sanadon, who had been asked by Deslandes to add such a commendation to his own volume of verse. We note the unstinted praise of the vagaries of youth and the rather shallow and frothy philosophy attached especially to Catullus. It is a view of life which, in its Gallic form, pervades the French poems and early prose writings of Deslandes. Above all it underlines the influence of Sanadon, which is demonstrated in the other Latin poems that make up the first edition of the Poetae Rusticantis Litteratum Otium.

One group, for instance, is addressed to school-friends and acquaintances, whom the poet exhorts to drink, make love and sing whilst the bloom of youth is still upon them.

Bibamus, socii, bibamus oro,
Canamus simul, & simul jocemur

begins the poem Ad Amicos (pp. 13-14); and in the pages that follow the poem Hilarius as Amicos merely echoes the exhortation:

Potemus teneri mei sodales,
Potemus vitreis merum cululiis...(p. 15)

Between these invitations to carouse we find two pieces to one Lycoris, whom he would invite to partake of other delights:

Monstra dulciculas mihi papillas,
Monstra lacteolos finus puella,
Inter candidulas puella nymphas
Candidissima: fare, quid moraris? (p.14)

Another group consists of epistles addressed to persons usually designated by a nick-name. Consider, for example, the jocularly satirical poem to one Vacerra ("block-head") and entitled De Marino elegantì musico (pp. 28-29); the verses to one Cotta (perhaps a Platonist),[24] and to a Parisian

Caesar Melissus (presumably of materialist leanings), who is told that, in the country, his friend has now happily recovered from a severe illness:

Tandem sollicitos, amice, questus,
Tandem pone metum molestiasque.
Vivit perlepidus tuus sodalis
Quicum saepe jocos bonus ferebas,
Et nunc frigidulam sedens ad undam,
Nunc dulces nemoris secutus umbras
Blandi deliciis potitur agri.
Me Phoebus pater, & novem sorores
Quae Pindi gelidos colunt recessus,
Vitae semianimem mihique reddunt. (p. 26)

This tendency to discuss personal afflictions in verse is illustrated moreover by an ode in the third book of the Latin poems, and which deserves particular mention since it figures in a MSS recueil, Variorum Carmina selecta etc., (B. Mazarine Nº 3960, ff. 17-18), in which it is almost the only poem to bear a signature. With the title Ad Oculos Meos gravi laborantes ophtalmia, it tells the sad tale of eye-trouble. Complaining that, although he is innocent of any evil-doing, his sight is now impaired, the author tells how he is no longer able to read, to pursue his hobby of numismatics, or to find any sweetness in life (v. Poet. Rust., ed 1752 pp. 53-54).

Happily such poems are not so numerous as the jocular pieces. There is one, for example, which is addressed in light and satirical banter to a young lady who has just taken the veil, and whom he warns against lascivious monks:

Quae te religio coëgit, heu,
Inter claustra domosque noquiores
Tristem ducere, mî puella, vitam ?
Ergo te monachi bibaciores,
Ergo te monachi falaciores
Videbunt simul, & simul tenellis
Dabunt oscula foediora labris ! (p. 18)

and to Jacques de Tourreil,[25] of the French Academy and the Sceaux circle of Madame du Maine, he sends a poem satirically drawing attention to the extravagance and luxury in which the Academician's lady friend (Corinna - Ovid's mistress) is living at this time:

Cras petes lepidae domum Corinnae,
Fulgentem aedepol ac domum nitentem !
Huc tu cum advenies, tibi talenta,
Aureos tripodas, ebur recisum
Et quos India parturit lapillos,
Ostendet nimium potens Corinna.
Quae tu cum adspicies, Jovem rogabis
Te totum ut faciat manum, Torelle. (p. 30)

Such, then, are the topics discussed in the Latin poems of Deslandes, which in many way are the sort of verse that would be expected from one brought up on the classics and in the company of pleasure-loving and sensual young comrades. In subject-matter the epistles remind us of Horace; the satires, Horace and Juvenal; and poems inviting young friends to snatch the opportunities of youth take us back to Catullus and Anacreon. And when, at the beginning of his sojourn in Rochefort, Deslandes wrote in the autobiographical

Mon Cabinet:

> De si tristes réflexions ne durent pas long-tems. D'autres leur succedent, qui sont plus vives & plus gaies. Je prens Anacréon ou Horace. Je me jette nonchalamment sur un fauteuil. Je puise dans leurs écrits cette douce Morale & cette Philosophie aimable, qui servent à répandre un baume salutaire sur tous les âges & toutes les situations de la vie.
> (in H.c., IV, pp. 194-195)

he was paying an anonymous tribute to a man who exercised a considerable influence upon his interests and ideas in his later school-days; for it is to Sanadon, translator of Horace and Anacreon, that he owes this comforting mental relaxation. To Sanadon too he is indebted for his fondness of imitating Marot, for his taste for epitaphs and for his interest in the Petrarchists. Indeed, casting his eye along his book-shelves before 1713 and noting there the works of Vergil, Horace, Catullus, Ovid, Plautus and Terence, he lets his gaze run on to authors who preserved the same traditions:

> Nec vos, ô reliqui mei poetae,
> Priscis vatibus additi paresque:
> Nec te transierim jocose Cotta,
> Acti blandule, blandiorque Bembe.
> .....
> Salve Castilio... (p. 22)

To whom does he owe this enthusiasm ? Turn to the Latin poems of his master, Sanadon (Carmina etc., p. 5):

> O Bembe, Cotta, O Castilio...
> Vester, poetae, vester Apollonis
> Subibo templum...

In short, we may conclude that it is from his master of Rhetoric that he acquires a liking for a pagan hedonism derived from Antiquity and from the Renaissance, How pregnant with possibilities is this fact will be appreciated

when we consider the Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant and the Art de ne point s'ennuyer, in which we find the paganism of college days combined with other contemporary influences. Indeed one can easily envisage a new kind of history of the Collège Louis-le-Grand - a history which, from Voltaire, Deslandes, and Diderot (see Oeuvres, ed. Assézat, I, 383) to Robespierre and Camille Desmoulins, would reveal just how many free-thinkers and deists this college unwittingly bred during the XVIIIth century!

b) Malebranche: an Education outside School

As we turn the pages of the 1752 edition of Poetae Rusticantis Litteratum Otium we come to verses In Mortem Nicol. Mallebranchii, Philosophi praestantissimi. There, after a conventional invocation to Urania (who presides over astronomy), called upon to mourn the passing of her illustrious nursling, the poet goes on to claim: " Mihi ille carus & mei arbiter ingeni". Affectionate regard and gratitude for intellectual guidance - these we must remember, for we shall find precisely the same tribute elsewhere in the works of Deslandes. There then follow expressions of regret at the philosopher's demise, supported by sincere tributes to the piety and nobility of character of the deceased:

Ah! luctuosa morte consumptus jacet
Quam grata pietas, quae virum solertia,
Quis diligentem candor & quae comitas
Quae fraudis & doli inscium ornabat fides!
Huic saecla nullum postera invenient parem. (p. 57)

Finally, in the rest of the poem, Deslandes gives a more conventionally worded estimate of the philosophic worth of Malebranche, claiming, in extravagant terms, that the leading thinkers of Greece are now superseded, and praising Euclidian method and Cartesian principles which have helped to simplify philosophy in his time.

There is no less enthusiasm about the tributes he pays in his native tongue. In the sections of Mon Cabinet referring to his early life, he has this to say of Malebranche:

De la vertu sincere,
Dans ton sein je puisai le goût.
Sublime caractère!
Mallebranche, je te dois tout.

Par ta main repoussée,
Se cache la prévention,
Et l'erreur méprisée
Ne nous fait plus d'illusion.

Ton amitié propice
Voulut me fixer dans ces lieux,
Où la paix, la justice,
T'offroient un avant-goût des Cieux.

Mais mon ame égarée
Méconnut le prix du bonheur,
Que ta main éclairée
Cherchoit à verser dans mon coeur.

To the second line of the third stanza quoted here is appended a foot-note:

Le Pere Mallebranche avoit fait tous ses efforts pour m'attirer à l'Oratoire. Mais des considérations de famille, jointes à un voyage indispensable que je devois faire dans les païs étrangers, m'empecherent alors de prendre ce parti. Combien ai-je depuis eu lieu de m'en repentir, lorsque surtout livré aux hommes, & engagé dans un tourbillon d'affaires, j'ai soupiré après la vie douce & tranquille que j'aurois menée à l'Oratoire (in M.c. IV, 192-193).

It is hardly necessary to stress the importance of these two passages, which represent perhaps the most definite of the rare biographical details provided by the author in his works. We learn much from these few lines: first, the relationship with Malebranche,[26] which, even if we allow our author to be proud after the event and therefore to exaggerate a little the " efforts" made by the greater man, is none the less a very clearly stated fact; secondly, we perceive the directions in which the influence was exerted, namely intellectual truth and moral virtue. An assessment of the former must wait until we come to consider Dedandes's attitude to Malebranche, the philosopher. Here we shall consider the striking tribute " je te dois tout" as far as it concerns Malebranche, the man.

Now, of course, during his pious retirement and his immense devotion to study at the Oratoire of the Rue Saint Honoré, the aged philosopher presented a spectacle which must have been for Deslandes something of a contrast to the accommodating morality of the Jesuits, who, it must be admitted, were not renowned for practising even the easy moral code they preached. Malebranche was different, in that his life, like his religion, was one of theocentric concentration. The friendship of such a person obviously left an impression upon the young Deslandes (for the references to journeys abroad mean that the period of this relationship must be placed before his English trip of 1712-13) - an impression which scarcely harmonizes with his comments upon the metaphysics or ethical system of Malebranche. For if the influence of the philosopher extended to these things we should expect to perceive it in the Histoire critique de la philosophie. We should expect to find that the word " morality" could never be mentioned without reference to God; that only the highest ideal of purity would suffice; that the worship of God and conformity to His immutable order were of infinitely greater importance than the needs of society. We should expect the stressing of a kind of monastic ideal of piety and duty to the Deity, of detachment and even self-mortification to attain this end. We do not, however, find these things. Instead the ethic of our author is quite different. Frankly rejecting Malebranchism as " trop sublime" (II, 358), he praises a partly pagan and partly Jesuit conception of morality, adapted to the needs of society - a morality in which God does not appear to have any significant part to play:

> Aussi les Philosophes Grecs, qui parloient suivant leur coeur, avoient-ils une Morale douce & accommodée aux différens besoins de la Société. Car toute sagesse qui ne procure point l'avantage d'autrui, qui ne tend point à rendre les hommes plus indulgens les uns envers les autres, ne mérite pas ce titre (II, 406).

How different from Malebranche, who " en morale,.. interdit au sage de jeter sur cet univers le moindre regard de

complaisance et d'amour", and who considered that "la voie ordinaire et la plus sûre pour tendre à Dieu est celle de la retraite et de la privation de toutes les choses sensibles"! (Ollé-Laprune, I, 508 and 512-13). We shall see later that this difference is accentuated by Deslandes's rejection of Malebranchian metaphysics; of the "vision in God"; of animal automatism, and of occasional causes - all of which he finds unacceptable in 1737. What, then, remains? A glowing tribute to a pious soul who, by his sincerity and erudition, commanded the respect of a young person; an ideal which attracted him at that age and which lingers to haunt him in his forties, amid the troubles of a thankless administrative career. It is a vision, not of life devoted to pious contemplation, but of life devoted to study away from the annoyances of a routine job; of retreat into carefree tranquillity with ample leisure for composition. That is what he regrets most in 1736 or thereabouts, when he writes Mon Cabinet. These are the delights snatched from his grasp by "family considerations" at the time the invitation was extended.

But what of the other party to the offer? We may certainly wonder what qualities Malebranche perceived in the young Deslandes which he considered would be of service to the Oratorians, since, at first sight, the author of the French poems and the Réflexions does not seem particularly suited to a life of piety, and especially to an order that claimed to reform the priesthood. Yet there are some Oratorian characteristics in this young pupil of the Jesuits, who in the Art de ne point s'ennuyer is the apostle of literary simplicity and sincerity; in the Latin poems a lover of studious leisure; in the Réflexions the advocate of religious concord, especially in this passage devoted to Pellisson:

Il s'abandonna dans la suite aux controverses: genre d'étude sec, épineux & plein d'illusions. Il écrivit même contre les Calvinistes d'une manière assez vive, mais sans aucun

fruit; telle est la destinée de toutes les disputes de Religion (ed. 1732, pp. 93-94).

Almost certainly too he had already shown some aptitude for natural science, in which the Oratorians of Paris showed such a marked interest that:

> Au jour où, pour célébrer la fête de Saint Louis, les membres de l'Académie des Sciences se rendaient à l'église de la rue St. Honoré, ils reconnaissaient que l'Oratoire avait bien mérité des sciences; ils affirmaient leur gratitude pour cette corporation si éprise de choses intellectuelles (Lallemand, p. 260).

Nor must it be forgotten that another feature of the educational principles of the Oratorians was a devotion to the mother-tongue rather than to Latin for purposes of enlightenment. For instance, as early as 1640, Condren had composed the first Latin grammar to appear in the French language. Now, Deslandes shared this preference: in the XIVth chapter of the Art de ne point s'ennuyer he pours scorn on those who, whilst being conversant with Arabic and Chaldaic, are ignorant of their own language; in 1736 he translates Musschenbroek's Latin oration into French; and in the following year he composes the first history of philosophy in French.

These, it will be argued, are mere details. Yet, if we take a wider view of the question, we see that the invitation extended to Deslandes is not so surprising as at first it appears. The Oratorians were liberal Catholics. Admittedly they generally inclined towards the Jansenist point of view; yet there were Berullian Jesuits too. The key-note of the organization was toleration and freedom, and its conception of the duties of a priest was wide and magnanimous. Of all the orders, then, surely this was the one for which Deslandes, raised by enlightened and broad-minded Jesuits, was most fitted.

His regrets expressed in Mon Cabinet have the stamp of sincerity, and indeed he returns to them, but more impersonally, in the Histoire critique. For instance, what he says in the first volume about the Essenes is precisely what he might have said about the Oratoire:

Le goût de la retraite qui, bien entendu, n'est que l'art de se rendre heureux, les réunissoit dans des maisons particulières & isolées, où chacun s'oublioit soi-même, & se dépouilloit de ses propres biens pour en revêtir la Société. Ainsi les Esséniens vivoient ensemble sans faste, sans ostentation, sans jalousie: ils gagnoient à ne point fréquenter les autres hommes, ce que les autres hommes perdent d'ordinaire à se fréquenter réciproquement. Si par hazard on en voyoit quelques-uns se porter au-dehors, c'étoit pour herboriser, pour recueillir des plantes, des racines salutaires, dont ils soulageoient ensuite les malades qui venoient implorer leur secours.... Du reste, les Esséniens n'immoloient point de victimes, n'entroient même dans aucun Temple: tout leur culte étoit intérieur, spirituel. (p.. 200).

A similar enthusiasm for liberal monasticism is disclosed in a passage in the second volume:

...les Pythagoriciens avoient encore des maisons de retraite, où ceux qui étoient parvenus à un certain âge, pouvoient se retirer & jouir en commun des agrémens d'une société unie par des besoins réciproques, & entretenue par une estime plus forte que les besoins. Ces maisons de retraite offroient un plan de vie simple, & tracé par la Nature elle-même. On n'y voyoit rien de commandé avec hauteur, ni exécuté avec contrainte; rien d'impérieux dans l'autorité, ni de bas dans l'obéissance. C'étoient des amis qui vivoient ensemble & qui se prévenoient les uns les autres, en adoucissant les devoirs & en facilitant les moyens de les remplir... (p. 86).

In both cases we perceive an enthusiasm unusual in the anti-clerical Deslandes, and which may therefore reasonably be attributed to an idealized recollection of what he might have enjoyed, had he been able to accept the offer.

It is legitimate to question, of course, the motives behind his desire; for the Oratoire demanded a degree of piety that the libertine Deslandes never achieved, and a more escape from the turmoil of business was certainly not what Bérulle had principally in mind when he founded the Oratoire. Be this as it may, the bitterness still remains at the time of the composition of the critical history, in which the author cannot resist an opportunity of attacking relatives who steer the young into useful situations. For instance, at one point in the second volume, the father of Socrates consults the oracle to decide what occupation his son should follow, but disdains the advice to let the youth follow his own inclinations. The author's comment is significant:

Nos plus dangereux, nos plus forts ennemis d'ordinaire, ce sont nos parens. Ils veulent qu'on ne songe qu'à utile, qu'à ce qui peut conduire dans les routes de la fortune. &

l'égard de la culture de l'ame, ils la négligent sans honte, sans retour, ou ils n'y font qu'une attention brusque & passagere... Pour réussir, il faut se trouver juste dans la place que la Nature nous a assignée...(p.111).

In these words we may perceive condemnation of his guardians, Boureau de la Brosse and Mouffle de la Tuillerie, who must have been chiefly responsible for the author's reluctant decision to pursue a "useful" occupation, and regretfully to decline the tranquillity of the Oratoire offered by Malebranche.[27]

c) Rochefort: the naval college

In 1742, when he applied for renewal in his favour of his father's letters of nobility, Deslandes spoke of having been attached to the Navy since 1708. This is true, for it was in May of that year that, by family consent, he inherited his father's commission (739/22/47). It was to prepare for assuming these duties that he was obliged to attend the naval college in Rochefort.[28] Holding the rank of commis, he was there to learn the art of navigation, methods of measuring a ship's tonnage, the business of supplying the fleet and shore establishments, the job of policing a port, and many other things necessary to a future commissaire.

It is clear, however, that this training was not to his liking; for, partly out of indolence and lassitude, partly out of a desire to participate in the literary and social life of the capital, and (conversely) partly out of distaste for the boring and boorish provinces, he seems to have felt nothing but disgust for his new situation. In words borrowed chiefly from Horace, he writes to his friend Caesar Melissus:

Dum te Parrisii tenent, Melisse,
Curis dulcibus occupatiorem
Me Rupella [La Rochelle] gravis tenet, Melisse,
Curis tristibus occupatiorem.
An nunquam mihi libero licebit
Totas ducere cantitando luces,
Sub quercu patulâ, vel ad sacrati
Caput fluminis & manu tenellâ
Narcissum legere ac rosas virentes?
Fessum me popularis aura vexat,
Cogor limina pr̃cipum superba
Manè ascendere, perpetique fastus
Et vanas procerum locutiones.

O rus atque animi medela nostri!
Dulcis villula, quando te revisam? (Poet. Rust., ed. 1713, p.25)

As we have seen, another poem in similar vein is written to his former mentor, Sanadon (Ad N.S. Sanadon, Cum autor Runerfortii degeret). It is clear then that he dislikes Rochefort and La Rochelle; that he is disgusted by the formalities of his training; that he abhors the clamour of the crowd; that he is tired of his masters' speeches; that he considers himself an exile from the refinements of civilized society - in short, that he is thoroughly unhappy.

But there appears to have been one redeeming feature of an otherwise dismal sojourn in this part of the provinces: it provided him with the opportunity of getting to know the hydrography master at the school, Thomas Lagny:

Lagni, noster amor, seu te natura moratur
Dulcibus intentum chartis, aevoque sequenti
Grandia pandentem sophiae praecepta latentis,
Seu calamo referas defensor candidus aequi
Errores populorum & nostrae incommoda mentis. (Poet. Rust., ed. 1713, p.33)

This regard was evidently based, then, on the author's esteem for Lagny's learning, for his character and for his opposition to popular fallacies. This is not the only tribute he pays to Lagny. In the Preface to his Art de ne point s'ennuyer (dated Paris, July 21st 1714) he shows his respect for this former master, " a man of great wit"; and in 1717 wishes to be remembered to him (Arch. Ac. des Sc., Dossier personnel, Deslandes, pièce 2).[29] What else was there about Lagny that commanded his respect? Thomas Lagny (1660-1734) had become a member of the French Academy of Science in 1695, and had held the post of hydrography master in Rochefort since 1697, when the generous favour of the Abbé Bignon had caused him to be elevated to that position. Now in the circumstances of this very appointment is revealed a trait of character likely to appeal to Deslandes: at first Lagny, a mathematician, declined the nomination on the grounds that he had no practical knowledge of the art of piloting a vessel, and was only induced to change his mind after he had made a sea-trip to learn the job at first-hand. We also know that

the hydrography master corresponded regularly with the Academy of Science, and paid frequent visits to the headquarters in Paris. Indeed the Histoire de l'Académie, publishing in 1738 an Eloge of its former member, reveals another motive for these frequent visits to the capital, which incidentally were to reap their reward in 1716 when Lagny was appointed Under-Director of the Banque Générale:

> M. de Lagny ennuyé de Rochefort, malgré les occupations de la place, malgré ses études particulières, malgré le plaisir d'y réussir selon ses souhaits...faisoit de tems en tems des voyages à Paris, pour épier les occasions d'y rester (Année 1734, pp. 149-150).

Here, then, was another bond between master and pupil: distaste for provincial life and desire to return as soon as possible to Paris. There is something more: this regular correspondence with the Academy was to be imitated by the pupil after he had established himself in Brest. Nor is this quite all: the Eloge in question (ibid,p. 151) informs us that Lagny was also in relationship with Leibnitz, and with the Duc de Noailles (whose house was to become the meeting-place for Boulainvilliers and his fellow libertines imbued with a French form of Spinozism). Moreover we learn that Lagny was also a disciple of Newton and a member of the Royal Society.

Now at last we can discern the full significance of our author's friendship with Thomas Lagny. For it is reasonable to assume that, through his teacher, Deslandes may have been put in touch with the Academy of Science, of which he was to become an élève in 1712; Newton and the Royal Society, with whom and which he was to make personal contact in 1712-13; the Abbé Bignon, the King's Librarian, with whom he was to correspond in 1729-31; the Boulainvilliers-Noailles circle of pseudo-Spinozists, whose influence is perceptible after 1715; the ideas of Leibnitz, which appear in his later writings. Surely, then, this disagreeable sojourn in Saintonge cannot be dismissed as a negligible episode in his career!

CHAPTER III AN INTERIM PERIOD: SOME LEGAL AND FINANCIAL MATTERS AND AN IMPORTANT MISSION

...ses parens le reçûrent avec beaucoup de joie & lui rendirent, contre l'ordinaire des parens, son patrimoine sans procès (H.c., II, 143-144).

Le Sçavant n'est point étranger hors de son pays: il trouve des concitoyens & des amis, par-tout où il y a des gens qui sçavent penser (ibid., pp. 263-264).

a) Testamentary Affairs

Between the end of his course at naval school and his journey to England it is almost certain that Deslandes resided in Paris, and the Réflexions of 1712 would point to some contact with Epicurean and Gassendist circles in the capital during this period.[30] He was also occupied, however, with serious, and often unpleasant matters, which can only be understood if we review testamentary and financial affairs of concern to the whole family. Inasmuch as they have bearing upon the life of André-François, the papers of the related families of Boureau-Deslandes, Mouffle de la Tuillerie and Boffin de la Sône reveal two periods of significance: a) 1703-24; b) 1745-50. It is with the first of these two periods that we are concerned at this point.

Before his departure for S^te^ Domingo under royal orders (and somewhat against his own inclinations), André Boureau-Deslandes naturally made provision for his motherless children who were to remain behind in France. He placed them under the tutelage of his brother and attorney, Joseph Boureau de la Brosse, then residing at the Hôtel des Ursins in the parish of Saint Landry, where he was temporarily domiciled at the time. The act of guardianship is dated 13th April 1703 - the same day as the future Commissaire at S^te^ Domingo was ennobled prior to assumption of his new duties abroad (739/22/42). Another event of importance occurred about this time: in July of the same year the eldest child of the family, Marie-Marguérite, was married to Barthélemy Mouffle de la Tuillerie, who had already been

appointed deputy-guardian to the Deslandes children, and who benefitted by a dowry of 54,000 livres (739/22/45; 738/35/1). During the year before his death at Léogane in October 1707, Deslandes (père) was busy sending to his brother Joseph possessions and merchandise for sale to increase funds available for eventual distribution to the children (634/24/106; 739/23/1-10).

Then the prospects of the Deslandes family were improved in September, under the will of the maternal grand-father, François Martin, dated 22nd September 1706; for, since the mother of the Deslandes children had died in 1697, the third share of Martin's bequest to his three daughters would naturally come to them:

> Après le deces de Marie de Cuperly mon Epouse je veux et entens que tous les biens qui proviendront de nos successions soient partagez entre nos enfans suivant la coustume de Paris (634/24/105).

Although Madame Martin did not die until February 1711, an act of 18th February 1710 records the handing over of 500 livres for André-François, François-Louis, Louis, Joseph, and Marie-Marguérite (739/22/31). In September of the year 1707, André Boureau-Deslandes signed his own will and testament, from which the children were to benefit on coming of age (25 under the Ancien Régime) (634/24/1). In this will the father commanded his children to treat their uncle and their brother-in-law with the same obedience, tenderness and confidence they had shown towards him; to live in peace with one another, showing respect also for their elder sister Madame de la Tuillerie, and for their elder brother André-François. At the same time he required that their guardian and deputy-guardian should procure for them a good education, and in fact should treat them as they would their own offspring.[31] The father's death followed swiftly, on 26th October 1707(634/24/62). We now return to the Martin fortune. In February 1709 Madame Martin had divided her properties in France (valued at 160,000 livres) into three parts - a third to Madame Desprez, a third to Madame Lauriau, and a third to the heirs of Marie

Boureau-Deslandes. This third share was to pass (like François Martin's bequest) to the Deslandes children even before the death of Madame Martin (634/24/62).

This is the moment when it is necessary to turn our attention to Joseph Boureau de la Brosse, to whom, as we have seen, was given the power to administer the estate of Deslandes (père)(since he was also attorney to his brother), and to act as custodian to monies and properties which fell to the children (634/24/111). One of these possessions was the office of Commissaire de la Marine (with emoluments valued at 30,000 livres) which in May 1708 (739/22/47) was passed on to André-François, on the understanding that he would receive profits from this office, pending a family decision as to whether it should be sold or given permanently to André-François. At this time, moreover, André-François and François-Louis were émancipés d'âge, and therefore enabled to dispose of their personal (but not real) estate before the age of twenty-five (739/22/47 and 66). On 17th March 1709 the Deslandes children demanded an inventory of their late father's effects in their uncle's possession; yet, despite this, we learn from a document which gives the family history in these years from the point of view of the heirs of André Deslandes (634/24/62) that La Brosse continued to exercise his custodianship over properties not only of the younger members of the family, but also of those who had been "emancipated"; and that he did so for his personal profit. Thus it was to the uncle that came the third share of the Martin fortune, and in January 1709 Madame Martin herself had to remind La Brosse of her wishes (634/24/105). At the end of 1710 the uncle owed André-François 1333 livres in emoluments from the office of commissaire; and it was not until March 1712 that, supported by their brother-in-law, the Deslandes children finally secured judgement condemning La Brosse to surrender sums due (739/23/20). In fact only in November of that year

was the final division of the estate of the Deslandes parents begun (634/24/62). Still Uncle Joseph clung to the revenues from the Navy, and it was late in 1712 that he finally relinquished them in favour of his nephew (ibid). The final receipt from André-Françbis, and written in his own hand, is dated 15th May 1713 (739/23/120). Meanwhile the young man had been obliged to travel to England with the Duc d'Aumont. Before setting off, however, he handed over the conduct of his affairs to a lawyer, Marchand:

Pardevant les Conseillers du Roy Nottaires au Chastelet de Paris soussignez sont presens. André françois Boureau Deslandes Ecuyer Conseiller du Roy Commissaire ordinaire de la Marine estant de present à Paris logé rue de Grenelle pres Saint Eustache a l'hostel du grand Louis, lequel estant sur le point de passer en Angleterre avec permission du Roy a la suite de Monseigneur le Duc Daumont et ne pouvant rester plus long temps en cette ville a fait et constitué son procureur general et special Maistre Jean Pierre Marchand, ancien procureur en la Cour auquel il donne pouvoir de pourluy et en son nom assister et estre present au partage des biens des sucessions de defunts Andre Boureau Deslandes Ecuyer Conseiller du Roy Commissaire ordonnateur de la marine dame Marie françoise Martin son Epouze ses pere et mere... (634/24/62).

Later in the same document it is arranged for Marchand to:

...signer ledit partage accepter le Lot qui escherra audit Sieur Constituant dans lequel sera compris l'office de Commissaire de la Marine dont le dit Sieur Constituant est pourveu pour la somme de Trente mille livres et les augmentations de gages attribuez pour cello de six mille livres, et generallement faire pour parvenir a la signature et confection dudit partage... (dated finally 16th November 1712).

The whole division of goods and effects was complicated, however, by three events: 1. the death in May 1711 of Marguérite, youngest child of the Deslandes family; 2. the renunciation of succession-rights in November 1711, by Marie-Marguérite, Madame Mouffle de la Tuillerie; 3. the Jesuit profession in November 1712 of Joseph, by which he renounced his right to all but an annuity. Nevertheless, such complications could not but augment the amount of money for distribution to the other children, and there is good reason to believe that, at least at the outset of his working-life, Deslandes was potentially well-endowed, and that, once his uncle's illicit gains had been recovered, he was in fact in quite a comfortable position.

A sort of nemesis soon caught up with Uncle Joseph. On 12th March 1716 the Chambre de Justice issued a royal edict " pour recevoir les comptes de tous ceux qui avaient été dans les affaires du Roi pour les fournitures des armées de terre et de mer depuis l'année 1689..." (Buvat, Journal de la Régence, I, 126). The new broom was cleaning up the corruption of the previous régime, and in December 1716 we find the name of Joseph Bonnerat de la Brosse, who (like the other found guilty) was obliged to pay four fifths of the " biens acquis depuis qu'ils avaient eu part aux affaires du Roi" - in his case a sum of 25,000 livres. (Despite the discrepancy in the name, a foot-note explains: " Ou plutôt Boureau; le savant Boureau des Landes était de la même famille" -Buvat, I,214).

There is now a gap in the events recorded in the family papers, but in the years 1723-24 there are also items (see 634/24/96) relating to a legal dispute centred round the succession of Boureau de la Brosse, and taking the form of an action to annul claims for debt from Joseph Gerberon, a merchant of Chartres, and Jacques Mesnard, bourgeois of Paris, against the estate of La Brosse. The outcome of this tussle does not appear to have been recorded, but it is an interesting commentary on the impecuniousness of the uncle who tried to defraud the Deslandes children during his life-time.

b) Deslandes in London

At the age of twenty-three Deslandes, having disembarked at Dover, found himself on the road to London. The next night he slept in the fair, clean city of Canterbury, and visited the Cathedral, where he found another curious epitaph to add to his collection. Then, after two days of tiresome journeying through a countryside much greener than the Continent could show, he found himself at the gates of the capital city, which had already announced its situation from afar by the heavy pall of foul chimney-smoke that hung about

it (N.V., 1717, pp. 235-239).[33]

This mission to England[34] was the young man's first official duty as Commissaire de la Marine, after that office had been finally and fully surrendered to him by La Brosse. There is no mystery surrounding his appointment at a time when he had so little experience. His brother-in-law held the rank of Trésorier de la Marine, and his family had long-standing connections with colonial and commercial affairs. Moreover, it is not unlikely that D'Aumont's friend, Jacques Vergier (1657-1720),[35] should have met Deslandes in Parisian Epicurean circles or (during the latter's course at naval college) at one of the many manses of the semi-secret, free-thinking, deep-drinking Méduse - an order of Bacchic chivalry for naval officers, of which Vergier (whom Deslandes remembers with respect in 1741 - Pigmalion, ed. 1742, pp. 106-107) was Prieur, "Frère Judicieux" and Chancelier (Vergier, Oeuvres, ed. 1780, III, 214-222). For D'Aumont himself Deslandes appears to have had the highest regard; and he certainly does not imitate Saint-Simon in condemning the character and reputation of the leader of the mission. On the contrary, in some of his writings, Deslandes pays his former chief a number of glowing tributes.[36]

The object of the mission was to undertake official discussions (with men like Prior) of technical preliminaries relating to the treaties shortly to be signed at Utrecht.[37] With such technicalities we are not concerned here: for, apart from professional contacts, the mission gave Deslandes the opportunity of meeting some interesting and important people. For instance, at that time no person could have appeared more important to him than Isaac Newton. Now there is no doubt at all that the young French visitor dined with Newton, and that Halley was also present at the meal.[38] Here no professional formalities were involved. Indeed, in the privacy of his own home, Newton appears to have disclosed his affection for a sort of natural religion

which was still dear to Deslandes in 1737 (H.c.,II, 264-265). There is no doubt that he was proud to have known personally the British genius, whose ideas and discoveries were to dominate XVIIIth century thought.[39] Thus in 1752 we find a poem, addressed to Newton "omnium qui sunt Mathematicorum principem" and entitled Nugarum Laus Satyrica - a conventionally and rather immaturely cynical picture of human life, the sport of gods tossing man to and fro according to their caprice, and a sort of mad comedy in which all classes and conditions play their part. Perhaps a trifle apologetically, the author of these lines begs the great Newton, to whom "Dame Nature has offered herself and willingly revealed her secrets", not to disdain a poet's flippant verses, which are intended to mirror the flippancy of life itself (in Poet. Rust., ed. 1752, pp. 64-66 Amus. du coeur et de l'esprit, XII, pp. 301 sqq.). It is undeniable too that this association with Newton and Halley was fruitful of much that was to appear in the Recueil de différens traités etc. of 1736. In the first place, the discourse on scientific method (translated from Musschenbroek) was Newtonian in origin; secondly, the treatises themselves remind us forcibly of contributions to the Royal Society's Transactions and of the stream of short monographs poured out by Halley. Indeed it would be safe to say that these contacts in London with leading members of the Royal Society (and the visit which he most probably paid to that society in May 1713) were the starting-point of Deslandes's serious interest in natural science.

There were also a number of distinguished Frenchmen in London at this time, chiefly refugees or sons of refugees (Sayous, Le XVIIIe S. à l'étranger, I, pp. 14-18). Their favourite rendezvous was the Rainbow Coffee House, where one might come across the "Baconian oracle", Pierre Daudé, who translated Chubb into French and was to be a severe critic of the Unigenitus; the Protestant pastor, Armand de la Chapelle, contributor to several journals, reviver of the Bibliothèque Anglaise and enthusiast for natural science;

Le Moyne, Coste, César de Missy and Durand, historian and poet. There too one might meet Abel Boyer, the French grammarian who had come over after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and who, about the time of Deslandes's visit, was finishing his life of that statesman and Epicurean, William Temple, whose Essay on Retirement Deslandes admires in the Art de ne point s'ennuyer (p.59). It was Boyer who was first to translate our author's Réflexions into English, and who tells us in his Translator's Preface that certain chapters were added to the 1712 edition during Deslandes's visit to the British capital.[40] One of these additions, the XIVth Chapter (Remarque sur les dernières paroles d' Henri VIII etc.) may well owe something to Boyer's considerable knowledge of British history. It is also a fact that from Boyer Deslandes managed to acquire a copy of this writer's translation of Addison's Cato, a play to which he refers somewhat disdainfully in the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre (p. 244 n.). However as the MSS of the last-named was already in the hands of the Abbé Bignon at the time he requested the translation, it seems likely that this reference to Cato was based on what Boyer told or showed Deslandes during his stay in London.

Moreover, at the Rainbow Coffee House in Marylebone it was possible to talk with Abraham de Moivre, one of the party at Newton's house on the occasion to which we have referred, a member of the Royal Society, mathematician and grammarian; with Pierre Desmaizeaux, friend of Bayle and Saint-Evremond, a confirmed Lockian and sceptic and an authority on English deism. It was he who collaborated with another member of the Royal Society, Dr. Pierre Silvestre,[41] in the task of editing and publishing the first complete edition of the works of Saint-Evremond. Deslandes certainly knew all three. To De Moivre, whom he calls the "New Euclid", he writes a poem at once flattering and mildly critical - flattering to a clever mathematicia and critical to one who apparently resists the attractions

of "vulgarization":

Eia rumpe moras disertulamque
Mentem concute? quid cupis latere?
Quid tuam obtegis eruditionem?
Soli scire tibi nefas scelusque est:
Aude scire aliis, tuoque dignum
Opus nomine fac brevi nitescat
Et doctae poliatur arte mentis. (Poet. Rust., ed. 1752,p.51)

The Latin poem addressed to Silvestre is more personal in tone and not at all critical. One the one hand it expresses gratitude for services rendered in time of trouble:

Ah! quantas tibi gratias rependam
Qui me semianimem e nigrantis Orci
Tetro limine doctior vocasti?
Te, dum vita meos fovebit artus,
Te canam meritum atque ad astra tollam
Blandis versicu is politulisque. (Anus. du coeur et de l'esprit, XII, p.299; Poet. Rust., ed. 1752, p.47)

On the other hand, the author likens his medical friend to Lucian, Voiture, Catullus, Marot and Anacreon, lauding him to the skies for his appreciation of Greek wit and for his own poetic ability. In fact, it is clear that Deslandes found in his benefactor those qualities of elegant Epicureanism and delicate classical urbanity which he appreciated at the time. Furthermore, since we know that the Poésies Diverses were sent to Desmaizeaux for publication after the author had left Britain (Birch MSS 4283, fº 138 rº), we may suppose that some of them may have been addressed to persons whom he knew in London. (For instance a foot-note to the Epigramme on p. 138 of the 1732 edition alludes to " une plaisanterie arrivée à Londres chez feüe Madame la Duchesse de Mazarin".) Thus we may reasonably conclude that one of these poems, A Monsieur S***, Médecin, is addressed to Dr. Silvestre. Once again the doctor's wisdom, wit and Epicurean philosophy are praised; and in a few lines the author outlines a cherished notion already acquired at Louis-le-Grand:

Lis cette Epitre, où sont propos joyeux...
Qui ne plairont és esprits populaires,
Remplis d'erreurs & de sottes chimeres.
Mais à toi seul, à tes amis charmans
J'offre mes vers; & ma Muse badine
Point n'a cherché les applaudissemens
De la Populace chagrine. (in Réfl., ed. 1732, p. 158)

By now it appears, therefore, that the idea of an intellectual élite, disdaining "...ces menus usages/ Qui du Vulgaire garroté/ Fomentent la crédulité" (p. 159) is firmly rooted in his mind, and that he classes himself and his friend Silvestre amongst "...quelques honêtes gens,/ Qui des sots très-bien se raillérent" (p. 160).

But it is with Desmaizeaux that Deslandes appears to have had the closest ties. At least we have most information about this relationship, for the British Museum has a number of letters written from Deslandes to Desmaizeaux (Birch MSS, 4283, ff. 138-144), after the writer had returned to Paris and had taken up residence with the La Tuillerie family. The first of these letters is dated 7th August 1713, and tells Desmaizeaux that his correspondent was in the country when he received the former's letter of 5/16 July. This, claims the writer, accounts for the delay in replying which should not be attributed to negligence. Their relationship in London has clearly been cordial:

> ...le commerce que j'ai eu avec vous à Londres m'a laissé un souvenir trop sensible et trop agréable pour ne pas chercher toutes les occasions de le continuer.

He has received, and is pleased with the first three proof-sheets of the Réflexions which are being published in London; but he points out one minor error. With this letter he is sending the Poésies Diverses with an Avertissement to be printed at the beginning, and asks for a copy of the complete work, once it is published. Some of the other copies should be sent to M. Dehetan de Chateauneuf in Calais, and the rest to a certain Père Boursault. The writer adds that he has been speaking of Desmaizeaux to Ganeau, the Paris publisher, and to Claude Buffier, the Jesuit author. Towards the end of the letter he adds:

> ...aimez-moi toujours, Monsieur, et je vous assure que personne n'aura pour vous des sentimens plus vifs d'estime et d'amitié.

Then he sends his regards to De Moivre, and to Lintott [sic] (the London publisher of his Poetae Rusticantis etc.).

The post-script shows Deslandes's interest in oriental languages - the interest of the future historian of philosophy

and student of biblical exegesis; for he asks the price of Bryan Walton's Biblia Polyglotta (1657, 6 vols., in-fol.), and enquires whether it is possible to obtain in London Proverbia Arabica with notes by Joseph Scaliger, an Arabic grammar and a history of Arabia.

Up to this point the correspondence is friendly, tranquil and even effusive. But in the next letter a new note creeps in. Now, on 14th September, he begs his correspondent to excuse his complaint that Desmaizeaux has not written to him for two months. Plaintively he asks: "M'auriez-vous oublié?", and adds: "pour moi, je conserve la même estime pour vous et la même amitié que vous méritez." Reminding Desmaizeaux that he has sent the French poems asked for, he expresses the hope that the work will soon be completed and asks once more that a copy should be sent to him "chez Monsieur De la Thuillerie, rue des fossez, Montmartre". He passes to the subject of his Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre, now in the hands of the Abbé Bignon, whose approval he is seeking. Ganeau, he says, will ultimately print the book, a copy of which he promises to send to the addressee of this letter. He concludes with extravagant protestations of his affection and esteem; and, in a post-script, requests a copy of Addison's Cato (translated by Boyer, as we have seen), which Silvestre has promised him.

But if the second letter shows a certain degree of anxiety and perplexity, the third (the date of which is obscured in the MSS) reveals impatience and annoyance:

> Dois je vous accuser de negligence, Monsieur, ou d'oubli? je n'ai point reçu de vos nouvelles depuis je ne sai quel tems, et vous me devez deux reponses. cependant je me flate que vous vous souvenez de moi. je le merite du moins par le plaisir que je me fais de penser a vous.

Once more he seeks news of the publication of the Réflexions, as he does not even know if Desmaizeaux has received the corrected proofs, or whether the French poems have reached their destination in safety. Here, indeed, is just cause for annoyance, and we feel a certain sympathy for the disquieted author who finds it so difficult to keep his

temper with such a bad correspondent. Realizing, however, that abuse will not serve his purpose of evoking a reply, Deslandes adds a few tit-bits of news from Paris: he speaks of the intrigues afoot regarding the choice of a successor to Regnier Desmarais[42] at the Académie Francaise, and remarks that Longepierre is fancied for the chair. Finally the inevitable post-script acknowledges the receipt of Cato (sent to him by Boyer), and reminds Desmaizeaux that there is such a thing as a postal service, which he can use whenever he pleases!

At this point it is perhaps legitimate to conclude that Deslandes is fighting a losing battle: either his correspondent is extraordinarily negligent or (which is more credible) has taken a dislike to a former friend. The coldness and formality about the opening phrases of the final letter of October 26th suggest that the writer was beginning to recognize the last-named possibility:

> Je croi, Monsieur, que vous aurez reçu les lettres que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous ecrire. je vous accuserai toujours de negligence, jusqu'á ce que je reçoive de vos nouvelles. car je ne croi pas que vous m'ayez entierement oublié: et pourquoi oublieriez vous l'homme du monde qui vous estime le plus?

But, as the last thing he wants to do is to break off relations with the person who is apparently seeing the Réflexions through the presses, he passes on to a matter demanding a reply. On behalf of a Benedictine, who, having compiled a catalogue of historians of several countries, has now arrived at the history of England, he requests a list of English historians who have written in their own language.[43] In return for this service, he promises to inform Desmaizeaux of the titles of French plays as soon as they are published. To begin with, he announces that La Mort de Xerxes of Crébillon [père] is to appear soon, and that he will send a copy when one is available. At the end of the letter he expresses the hope that he is not in fact forgotten by his friend; and, in a post-script, sends his regards to De Moivre and Du Noyer.[44]

We have not solved the mystery of the obstinate silence maintained for at least three months by Desmaizeaux, but there is one probable explanation. Let us return to the first of the letters, and deduce therefrom some details of Desmaizeaux's communication of 5/16 July 1713. The writer of the latter appears to have been taking charge of the publication of a London edition of the Réflexions, augmented since 1712, first by additions to the text made in London, secondly, by the French poems presumably required to fill up the slender volume. Now we have no knowledge whatsoever of the existence of a London edition of this work: the edition of 1714 was published at Rochefort by Lenoir (B. Mus. 716, a. 20). The only other possibility is that we have to do with the Boyer translation of 1713; but surely, in that case, it would be Boyer who would be reading the proofs or corresponding with the author in France.[45] Moreover, since Deslandes was obliged to read Cato in translation, it is unlikely that his knowledge of English would be sufficient to undertake the task of proof-reading an English text. Ruling out, then, the second possibility, we are driven to conclude that a London edition (in French) of the Réflexions was begun, but that it never in fact materialized; and that, having failed to carry through the promised task, Desmaizeaux preferred to ignore the author's letters after the month of July. One thing is certain: Desmaizeaux certainly received those letters in London (which ~~probably~~ accounts for their present location), and passed on to Boyer the request for a copy of Cato, which had in fact been promised by Silvestre. The refusal to reply to questions about the projected publication of the Réflexions would appear therefore to have been deliberate.

Two other sets of conclusions are to be drawn from the data we have given about Deslandes's relationships in London. For the first we have to return to the Birch MSS, the real value of which lies first, in the names mentioned

therein - Claude Buffier of the Collège Louis-le-Grand; Silvestre and De Moivre of the Royal Society; Du Noyer, Lintot , Ganeau, publishers; lastly Boyer and Desmaizeaux: secondly, in the mention of Arabic books and the Polyglot Bible, the importance of which we shall discuss at the proper time. The second set of conclusions are of more general significance. In England our author deepened and developed notions acquired before he visited that land. In India he had already begun painfully to observe the value of naval supremacy, and to acquire information about three ceremonial religions, which (we suggested) provided the soil in which deism would later flourish. In Parisian Epicurean circles and at Louis-le-Grand he had absorbed a good deal of pagan and modern hedonism, and, at the college, had gleaned some elementary knowledge of Newtonian method. At this time, too, he had probably become convinced that "advanced" ideas were not for general consumption. In Rochefort he had come into contact with Lagny, a Newtonian and member of the Royal Society.

Now, our author's experiences in London tie up with these things. He met Newton at a moment when he was disclosing his private deism to a select few. He most probably paid a visit to the Royal Society, performed simple experiments, and came to know Halley, De Moivre and Silvestre - all members of that learned association. In London he also came into contact with the philosophic heirs of Madame de Mazarin, Saint-Evremond, Saint-Réal[46] and the rest; and with persons who were conversant with the ideas of Hobbes and Locke. To Bolingbroke he refers in a foot-note to the Nouveau Voyage (p. 255, n. (a)), and was in London at the time of Shaftesbury's death in Italy. These two also must have been the subject of many discussions at the time. Furthermore, he had lived amongst a people who were commercially strong because they possessed an efficient and powerful fleet, and whose success in war was the reason why the London discussions were being held at all. In these directions, then, the gains of former years were consolidated.

CHAPTER IV BREST

...un Auteur qui est retiré dans un coin de Province: il ne trouve aucun sujet d'émulation, &.il converse rarement avec des personnes d'esprit (Réflexions, ed. 1732, p. xiii).

Tout les attire, & les campagnes riches d'une infinité de plantes, & les mers orageuses, & les mines où l'on va, pour ainsi dire, prendre la Nature sur le fait & observer ses ouvrages à demi éclos (H.c.,II, 327).

a) A Collector of Scientific Oddities

The impetus imparted by the London visit was tremendous and nowhere more immediately effective than in the domain of natural science. At a later stage we shall discuss technical aspects of the scientific career of Deslandes: here we are merely concerned with noting his main interests during his sojourn in Brest,[47] and with drawing conclusions relative to the development of his personality.

The years 1714-36 are marked principally by his association with the Academy of Science in Paris, to which he had been admitted élève géomètre on 14th February 1712,[48] and of which he was to become successively associé mécanicien and (on 3rd January 1716) adjoint géomètre supernuméraire. Now one of the conditions of membership had been made clear in the regulation of April 1699, drawn up on the occasion of the Academy's removal to appartments in the Louvre:

...chacun devait, à jour fixe et à tour de rôle, communiquer le résultat de ses travaux et ne jamais demeurer dans rien faire (Lecler, La Gde. Encl., Paris, 1903, art: Académie).

To this regulation Deslandes adhered with fidelity, in that he was assiduous in communicating the results of his observations and researches. These monographs are as varied as the interests of the contemporary curieux: indeed, the Academy, itself possessing a sort of cabinet des curieux and having two rooms and a garret in the Louvre stocked with skeletons, globes of the world and show-cases containing working models of the latest machines, was

primarily concerned with amassing information about all manner of oddities. So Deslandes naturally spread the field of enquiry over a vast number of phenomena and subjects, in order to keep the Academy supplied with varied reports.

Published in the different editions of the Recueils (but in the main collected before 1736) or in learned journals, the "scientific" writings, which we have listed in our Bibliography, fall roughly into four groups. First, there are those which appear chiefly as the outcome of a desire to spread general knowledge. For instance, we find items about natural phenomena (e.g. the inundation of Roscof by a sand-storm); physiological abnormalities (the child at Lanvau suffering from ankylosis, and the curious hybrid from the Barbary coast, called cani-apro-lupo-vulpes); reports concerned with the natural history of the sole and shrimp, with sea-birds laying their eggs in large shells and with grubs reputed to assist the reproduction of certain kinds of oyster. Into this category fall also many of the archaeological monographs relating to stone-cirdles (e.g. Stonehenge) and to the Portus Saliocanus of Ptolemy; geological items, like the reported discovery of pyrites (mistaken locally for silver) between Crozon and Roseauval; studies of the Breton language; reviews of the history of French colonial affairs (written, however, partly to vindicate his family's reputation in India); incursions into the realms of human geography and demography (hunting-methods of the natives of Hirta, Scotland, and speculations about world-population; discussions about the arts of naval manoeuvres and ship-building in ancient times).

Secondly, there are monographs the object of which appears to be more strictly utilitarian. In this connection, we think of those concerned with fishing (salmon-fishing in Breton rivers, whale-fishing by the Basques, and unidentified fishes driving the mackerel and sardine from the Western coasts of France); numerous attempts to improve the efficiency of transport and of the armed services (ingenious

revolving oars by means of which a boat could procced upstream along a rope tethered along the bank, articles about artillery-fire and about matters relating to the corps of engineers, and suggestions for making drinking-water safe and palatable during sea-voyages and for destroying the worms that eat into a ship's timbers).[49] Here too we must class reports about climatic abnormalities of certain kinds - winds, the barometer, and the formation of ice in unusual latitudes; articles devoted to improving industry and agriculture (dyes extracted from coal, methods of preserving grain and of stimulating the growth of plants). Such items, though undoubtedly of some general interest, are none the less intended to render practical help and advice to specialized sections of the community.

But man does not progess by material means alone, and this scientist who was also a "philosopher" realized that he had to combat not only primitive methods but also primitive minds. In this we may find the connexion between the entertaining and technological on the one hand, and the "philosophic" and didactic on the other. For example: by statistics gleaned in local hospitals he proves there is no truth in the age-old theory of Aristotle that more people die at the ebb than at the flood-tide; a tiny female effigy found at Bloscon is described from the point of view of the archaeologist, principally to combat local superstitious speculation about its magic origin and powers; the blighting of fruit in the author's garden during a particularly fierce tempest is explained not as the work of the Devil - the local theory- but as the consequence of the volatalizing of sea-salt in the air; lightning which struck the tower of Goüesnon Church during bell-ringing is attributed not to evil powers, but to the effects of sound-waves;[50] and various rational explanations are offered of the primitive use of some wedge-shaped metal objects (coins de fonte) found in quantity in a Breton marsh and viewed with

are-struck credulity by the folk of the district.

Furthermore, upon this purely rationalistic approach are based the more tendentious of the monographs. Of the positively "philosophic" articles we must mention that devoted to the motion of the Earth, in which he seeks to vindicate Galileo; the speculation about the anatomy of the nervous system in order to find some rational, physical explanation of affinities and allergies; the examination of two engravings of the previous century which leads to a highly important discussion about the best form of government for France; the insertion into the Recueils of previously published letters about luxury and about the writing of history.

The climax of this spate of publication occurred in 1736, when the first of the four Recueils de différens traités appeared; for the first half of this edition was taken up by the Discours sur la meilleure manière de faire les expériences, in which Musschenbroek's Latin exposition of Newton's scientific method was made available to the French reading public. So great was the success of this Recueil (containing monographs already published elsewhere, and some new ones) that it was translated into English, Flemish and Italian, and (as Mornet tells us) stood beside the work of Buffon on the shelves of the educated reader. Indeed: "entre Deslandes et Buffon, c'est Deslandes qui est le plus connu" (Sc. de la Nat. au XVIIIe S.,,ed. 1911, pp. 109 and 248-249). This wide appeal is explained by the fact that the work catered for a demand for intriguing and unusual phenomena and for reports of simple experiments. Indeed, the Correspondance Littéraire (ed. Tourneux, I, pp. 425-426) declared that the work was to be esteemed because it avoided pedantry, and Fréron (Ann. Litt., 1757, V, p. 160) was to praise the author's seductive candour in the quest of truth, his simplicity of style and modest presentation.

b) A Collector of literary Curiosities

We turn next to a brief episode in the career of Deslandes, the collector of curiosities. The years 1729-31 are worthy of special attention because of our author's correspondence with the King's librarian, the Abbé Bignon (1662-1743). This influential prelate appears to have owed his early advancement to the fact that he was a nephew of Pontchartrain; yet, despite suspicions of nepotism attached to his sudden elevation, Bignon was certainly not without talent, intelligence or diligence.[51] In 1701 he gave to the Journal des savants the form that it was to have during most of the century; moreover he composed two works himself (La Vie de Francois Lévesque in 1684, and, under the pseudonym Sandisson, Les Aventures d'Abdulla in 1712-14), and his work upon an inventory of books in the Royal Library, his own collection of some 25,000 volumes, and above all his assiduity in adding to the royal collections are facts that cannot be ignored. For instance, Buvat mentions one case of the Abbé's interest in curious liturgical documents:

> M. l'abbé Bignon étant allé visiter l'ambassadeur turc... cet ambassadeur remit à cet illustre abbé une liturgie grecque et deux autres en arménien manuscrites, dont M. le marquis de Bonnac l'avait chargé à Constantinople pour la bibliothèque du Roi...(II, p. 231).

But it is particularly as a protector of literary men and of worthy savants of all kinds that his own generation respected him. As early as 1701, it was Bignon who secured for Fontenelle the secretariat of the Academy of Science; eight years later President Hénault thought it worth while introducing to the Abbé the young Réaumur, recently become a member of the same Academy (1708); in 1721 another person had good reason to be glad of coming to the notice of Bignon:

> M. Raguet...fut nommé à l'abbaye de Blanchelande...; ce qui lui donna lieu de remercier M. l'abbé Bignon de la place que cet illustre abbé lui avait donnée en la Bibliothèque du Roi...(Buvat, II, p. 172);

finally, Tournefort was enabled to make his celebrated journey

to the Levant thanks to the benevolent interest of Bignon, in recognition of which he called one of the new families of plants discovered Bignonacées (Maury, p. 48 and n.2).

It was natural that Deslandes should hope for similar favours. His first recorded contact with Bignon occurred about 1713, for in that year a letter to Desmaizeaux (14th September 1713) contains this sentence:

> J'ai remis à l'abbé Bignon mon voyage d'Angleterre pour en avoir la probation [sic] et la faire ensuite imprimer... (B. Mus., Birch MSS. 4283 fº 140)

Now, as Bignon was royal censor until April 1717 (Buvat, I, 256) the relationship may have been purely official at that time, although it is quite possible that Fontenelle introduced them to each other. It is the subsequent connection that concerns us here, and in this case the link was probably Lagny, Deslandes's tutor in Rochefort, who himself had cause to be grateful to the protector of men of talent. For the Abbé had helped to have him nominated hydrography master at the naval college in Rochefort and later had appointed him conservateur of the King's library. Thus we may safely attribute the relationship between Deslandes and the Abbé during the years 1729-31 to the interposition of the retired school-master from Saintonge.

Unfortunately only half of the correspondence appears to have survived, and we must deduce the replies of Bignon.[52] The letters (B.N. MSS, f. fr. 22228, ff. 1-66) are written in our author's most careful hand. That of 6th February 1729, sent from Brest, speaks of the writer's efforts to encourage production of an effective pitch for the Navy. Very obsequiously he declares that he always relies on his correspondent to teach him the limits of his duty; and with the letter he sends two mémoires, one concerning Ouessant, and the other the mortality-rate in lower Newfoundland and a Provençal insect chenille de mer. The second letter, dated April 30th 1729, begins with a proud acknowledgement of Bignon's approval of Deslandes's

communications to date, and a promise that " Je ferai encore de nouvelles recherches sur les curiosités que peut offrir la basse-Bretagne". This is clearly the task upon which he is principally engaged in Bignon's service, for he goes on to tell more of the strange customs of the Island of Ouessant and recounts how he has asked the Governor about marriage-ceremonies and protection against theft. He then passes to one of the most frequent topics in these letters - the Celtic language, which he has studied somewhat spasmodically but sufficiently to be convinced of the usefulness of such researches. And he adds a tit-bit regarding its lack of a superlative, which necessitates the use of an expression equivalent to the French " je vous aime en vous aimant" for " je vous aime beaucoup". Then, wishing to impress Bignon with his mature knowledge of such matters, he proceeds to a generalization: Languages change because they are enriched by the talents of those who use them. Thus, he argues, if every fifty years or so a new dictionary were to be made of a language, we should have a reliable yard-stick by which to measure the progress of the civilization in question. As an illustration, he points out that Celtic has words for agricultural and military matters, but almost none at all for arts and sciences - a fact that betokens a culture almost completely divorced from book-learning. That is why Celtic books are rare, and that obviously is why Bignon is anxious to secure some of them for the Royal Library. The latter has asked for books in which Celtic and French are printed side by side: his humble servant submits the opinion that the Library could well do without such works, but adds that he will seek them if still desired. Despatching with this latter the "best" Celtic dictionary (that of Maunoir), he adds that he can recommend that of Dom Louis le Pelletier, from which he himself has acquired his knowledge of the Celtic tongue. Yet for etymologies, he is of the opinion that Vossius, Du Cange and Ménage are better. The provincial corres-

pondent offers to Bignon the life of a Celtic saint, which he has translated into Latin, and mentions the curious f ct that in Celtic (as in Latin) the words for "heat-soup" and "law" are virtually identical - a fact which he ingeniously explains by the custom of soup being dealt out equally and equitably to each child in the family !

Of all the letters, that of 20th May 1729 establishes most clearly the purpose for which Deslandes is being employed at this time; for here we find a list of works already supplied by him to the King's Library. Moreover the writer hastens to add, in words deliberately deferent, that he is proud to be satisfying Bignon's curiosity "en un pays aussi ingrat et aussi stérile que la Basse-Bretagne". In addition he promises to send a rare Breton dictionary along with some old dramatic pieces from Breton folk-lore. Clearly the Librarian has been requesting Celtic translations of the New Testament. On this matter his correspondent is frankly ignorant: by way of compensation, however, he admits that he knows one in Welsh (which is so similar to Breton that conversation is possible between the two peoples), and that there exist two MSS translations of the Bible into Breton. Finally he asks: "How shall I send you the eleven books I have procured ? Shall I send them to your address directly, or via Maurepas ?" And he concludes: "j'attens vos ordres".

On July 3rd he sends four Breton works: L'Histoire de Sainte Anne en Aurai; La Tragédie de Sainte Barbe; Recueil de cantiques spirituels; Recueil de Noëls. In addition, he will try to get from a local priest the works of a famous Franciscan who printed his own books some hundred and fifty years before. Finally he confesses ignorance of the Breton dialect used by the Paludiers around the mouth of the Loire, but promises to look into the question.[53]

His efforts are now becoming more and more feverish. Already he has another set of volumes to send off; and, submitting as always to the superior knowledge of Bignon, he asks the

Bibliothécaire not to hesitate to reject any unfit for the royal collections. It is in fact by royal command that he is about to set out on a tour of a royal forest and of examining there the possibility of carrying out some projects of the Marquis of Seignelay[54] (see Ess. Mar. Comm., 1743, p. 118). On the way he will look up Dom Louis le Pelletier to ask him about his dictionary; will faithfully report any curiosities of physics or archaeology; and will write later about the Paludiers. The 16th of the following month finds him back with three more works for the Library. He apologizes for the poor condition of these volumes, and intends next time to secure even rarer books. Meanwhile he has recommended the Capuchin Grégoire, author of one of the MSS dictionaries, to present his respects to Bignon, with a view to eventual publication of this work. He indicates a few sources worth tapping to acquire more Breton books, and agrees personally to contact priests in country districts who are usually knowledgeable about such literature. Finally, adding remarks of interest about things noticed on the journey across the wilder parts of Lower Brittany, he comments upon the curious architecture of some of the churches and the filthy condition he found them in.

The letter of September 13th tells of another trip to interview the priest of St, Brieuc in Quimper who has translated the whole Bible into Breton. It is accompanied by a mémoire from this old ecclesiastic, now more than eighty years of age. Rather pathetically, Deslandes points out that this person, though anxious to have his work published, will obviously not live to see the event. Yet he has secured the MSS which he will send to the Royal Librarian in an oak chest. Ten days later, there follows a letter which reveals that the author is already thinking of his future Essay sur la Marine des Anciens, for it informs Bignon that he has already written a monograph about galleys in Antiquity. The intellectual poverty of Brittany is once more stressed, for he declares that the Bishop of Quimper

has proffered the information that in the whole of his diocese there is only one book-seller, and that the latter is dying of hunger, poor fellow, and has turned for sustenance to the most lucrative profession in that part of the country, namely that of wine-merchant.

The letter of October 16th takes up some points already raised. " Will Bignon receive the MSS of Grégoire for the King's Library ?". He mentions again the architectural peculiarities of Lower Brittany. Once more, moreover, he shows complete subservience to the influential Librarian (this time on the subject of Latin derivations from the Celtic):

...je m'en remets entièrement à vos lumières qui sur toutes sortes de sujets, sont et plus sûres et plus décisives.

Now this particular display of obsequiousness appears to have been made because of some rebuke which Bignon has made about his handling of the affair of the St. Brieuc MSS. The suggestion is that Deslandes was wrong in giving the old man any hope of publication. In self-defence our author replies that there seemed no harm in telling a man of eighty that he would do his best in the matter, and that in any case he had really restricted himself to the opinion that the Psalms were worth publishing.

These excuses did not weigh very heavily with Bignon. Significantly there follows a whole year of silence, broken on the 1st October 1730 by a letter from Deslandes explaining that Maurepas has sent to him a young fellow with an invention potentially useful at sea. Visibly chastened by the long interruption of correspondence and cautious now about taking matters into his own hands, Deslandes explains guardedly that, not wishing to discourage an enterprizing inventor "je lui donnai un certificat aussi favorable que l'intérêt de la vérité me le permit". A copy of the certificate in question is enclosed for the Abbé's approval and to commend to the protection of Bignon this young man, Lormaillère Bonneur. Humbly he intimates that he has done

for Bonneur only what was in his own limited powers: "Je l'ai aidé de mon côté autant que je l'ai pû, et que mes forces me l'ont permis". Another protracted period of silence ensues; but on 24th April 1731 Deslandes sends Bignon another Breton book, and remarks - perhaps to stimulate interest- that he has recently seen a history of the world, published in Latin in 1493, printed in Gothic characters and containing a portrait of Antisthenes wearing spectacles ! Finally, there is a topic which is continued in the next letter (July 12th, 1731) - the drying of wood by artificial means for the use of the Navy. The conscientious Commissaire is anxious to show his concern for the efficiency of the Fleet:

> Vous ne sçauriez croire, Monsieur, dans quelle misère est aujourd'hui la Marine au sujet des bois.... On en apporte ici de tous les côtés du royaume, et ils se trouvent tous mauvais.

He adds that he is zealous that Maurepas and Bignon should have the facts about this serious problem (which he discusses in the Essay of 1743 - pp. 113-119); and mentions too that he has sent Maurepas a mémoire about different ways of determining the jaugeage of a ship (see Arch. Ac. des Sc., dossier: Deslandes). Last of all, he communicates to Bignon his monograph about the coins de fonte (M. de Tr. fév., 1732).

General conclusions will be reached later: let us here record, however, that relations were strained after the affair of the St. Brieuc MSS. Apparently the reason for this unfortunate development is to be found in the fact that Deslandes's excessive use of personal initiative was resented by the Royal Librarian, who consequently did not do for his hopeful correspondent what he had done for Fontenelle, Raguet, Tournefort or Thomas Lagny.

c) Deslandes and Réaumur

It is not surprising that Deslandes came into contact with a man who was perhaps the most representative scientist of his day; for, on different scales, their interests and activities were roughly parallel, and both were members of the Academy of Science.

Correspondence between them begins in the year 1720 (Arch. Ac. des Sc., dossier: Deslandes). At the beginning of that year Deslandes was clearly on good terms with Réaumur: a letter of January 24th (not 29th, as recorded in the catalogue of the Academy) begins with these words:

Je suis infiniment sensible, Monsieur, aux marques d'amitié dont votre lettre est remplie. je ne tarderai point a vous en aller remercier moi-même. ce sera des premiers plaisirs que Paris me procurera à mon retour.

The writer then goes on to thank his correspondent for offering to secure for him a copy of the Mémoires of the Academy for the year 1718, and asks that this should be left in the safe-keeping of his brother, the Abbé Deslandes, at the Collège de Justice in the Rue de la Harpe. This brother [François-Louis], he explains, is taking charge of his business affairs whilst he is in Brest - an excellent arrangement, since "philosophers" are anxious to have as few such responsibilities as possible. He turns next to technical matters: moss, growing on trees in proximity to the sea, manages to ruin them by rot. But, close to the sea or not, trees would suffer from the excessive dampness of Brittany:

j'ai un cabinet assez petit et ou je fais du feu pendant pres de huit mois de l'année. je n'y puis rien conserver qui ne se moisisse au bout de tres peu de tems. vous ne serez pas surpris de cette grande humidité... si vous examinez la situation de la Bretagne... de quelque côté que le vent souffle, les vapeurs qui s'élevent de la mer y sont portées et l'assiègent, pour ainsi dire... aussi pleut-il continuellement dans la basse-Bretagne, et on ne peut s'y deffendre de l'humidité.

This state of affairs is confirmed by the moss that grows on trees in low-lying and marshy areas of Brittany. The letter is brought to a close with a protestation of sincere and inviolable attachment to Réaumur.

A year later there is evidence of the same degree of familiarity and of regularity of contact (January 15th 1721). Deslandes begins, conventionally enough, by declaring that he had hoped personally to extend to Réaumur good wishes for the New Year - one full of all that a "philosopher" deserves. And, to qualify this last remark, he adds one of his favourite ideas: by moderating his desires the philosopher makes up for lack of material possessions, and is always rich in respect of inner resources. The writer returns to his opening remarks: it is the inclemency of the weather that has prevented him from coming to Paris again to offer his greetings to a brother-scientist: "...on est assiégé dans les Villes, et personne n'en peut sortir sans courir risque de se noyer". He passes on to details of his own experiences. Since last he saw Réaumur, he has been to buy back a small property near Nantes, which formerly belonged to his family. Why has he done so at this particular time? The letter explains it all quite clearly:

...j'ai employé une partie de mes billets de banque. je garderai le reste, sans trop sçavoir ce que j'en ferai ni pourquoi je les garde.

And he adds a remark typical of one who is rather bewildered by the consequences of the Law System: "...il n'y a point de prudence qui ne soit déconcertée par tout ce qui s'est passé depuis un an". This task of recovering the family property has obliged him to follow the coast road from Nantes to Brest (on the return journey) - a route rugged and sometimes terrifying in its wild grandeur. For instance: between Vannes and Hennebont he stood for more than an hour gazing at the monstrous and curiously fashioned menhirs of Carnac, and asked himself over and over again what could possibly have been the purpose of these hundreds of blocks of stone, some of which are so heavy that it would take at least twelve men to move them. Further on, he has been impressed by the number of trees covered in moss; and he has remarks to add to previous discussions of this phenomenon.

Contrary to an observation reported in the Mémoires of the Academy of Science for 1716, he has noted that even nut-trees are not free from the distemper. This general decay he regards as a disaster for the Navy, and he mentions Colbert's project referred to (a few years later) in the letters to Bignon:

> tous ces arbres deviennent par là inutiles à la construction des vaisseaux et je vous dirai que feu M. de Seignelay qu'on peut regarder comme le créateur de la Marine en France, avoit eu dessein de lui approprier tout le terrain qui est à 7 ou 8 lieuës de la Mer et de le faire planter d'arbres propres a bâtir des vaisseaux. j'ai vû meme le projet qui fût dressé alors, mais qui échoüa par la raison que je viens de dire.

On this note of professional concern he brings his letter to a close; but not before he has asked Réaumur to address his reply to Brest (even though his correspondent is away at the moment in Landervaneck), has expressed the hope that he will be in Paris on the 15th of next month, and asked Réaumur to find him any copies of the Mémoires of the Academy after 1717.

As we have seen, this letter suggests that it was one of many that passed between them, and the beginning and end indicate fairly regular meetings. Frequency of correspondence is confirmed, in the years immediately following, by an article in the Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences of 1728, which consists of a letter of 1723 to Réaumur "extraite de lettres écrites de Brest à Mr. de Réaumur". On this occasion he is telling his brother-scientist about a peculiar kind of worm (which eats its way into the timbers of a ship) discovered on the Roi l'Hercule, which had put into Brest after a trip to Louisberg and the Ile Royale. The worm in question is covered in a sort of sheath and possesses a parasol-like tail. Deslandes reports that he has performed one or two experiments with these creatures: he has tried them as bait for fishing, and has kept some in a barrel of sea-water to see if they could survive away from a ship's planking. Here, then, is the minor scientist writing to a colleague whom he knows to be interested in this branch of natural history, and who himself is much concerned for the efficiency of the Navy.

Certainly the friendly interest of Réaumur must be reckoned amongst the influences which, after the London visit, encouraged our author to pursue his part-time scientific career. Yet probably the most important part played by Réaumur in this direction is to be discerned around the year 1734, when, writing in the Mémoires, he drew attention to Musschenbrock's Latin translation of the Tentamina of the Florentine Academy of Science.[55] As it is to this translation that is prefixed Musschenbroek's Latin oration in scientific method that Deslandes was to publish in French two years later, it would appear likely that the source of the latter's interest in Musschenbrock's oration is to be found in his contact with Réaumur.

But, as often happens, a modest success may erase from the mind all thoughts of gratitude; and immediately after the publication of the Recueil there is a change in the relationship, due, we must suspect, to the somewhat arrogant sense of independence which makes Deslandes unwilling to acknowledge the superiority of Réaumur. In 1737 the Abbé Goujet's Bibliothèque française published what must certainly be considered a favourable review of the Recueil. Yet, stressing the influence of Réaumur, it did not hesitate to make one mild rebuke:

> Elève de Mr. de Réaumur, il n'en faut pas davantage pour se faire une idée tout-à-fait avantageuse de ce Livre. Cependant bien des gens sont d'avis qu'il eût été encore plus digne de l'attention du Public, si Mr. de Réaumur avoit pû y jetter les yeux avant l'impression...(Vol. XXV, p. 90).

This remark, sound as it may well be, was not to meet with the approval of the author of the new work: in the following year he replies to the writer of this review (Mr. le Chevalier de S...) in words which reveal the friendship that has existed between Réaumur and himself, but rejects that suggestion that Réaumur's professional advice would have improved his writing:

> 1. Le Journaliste me nomme par distinction, Eleve de Mr. de Réaumur. En vérité, cela me fait bien de l'honneur: mais malheureusement je n'ai d'autre raport avec lui que d'être depuis plusieurs années son Serviteur & son Ami. Je l'estime infiniment, & je m'imagine qu'il ne me haït point.

2. Le Journaliste ajoute que bien des gens sont d'avis que mon Ouvrage auroit été plus digne de l'estime du Public, si Mr. de Réaumur y avoit jetté les yeux avant l'impression. Permis au Journaliste de s'imaginer sur cela tout ce qu'il jugera à propos. Mais je le supplie de considérer que rien au monde n'est plus différent que notre manière de penser, d'écrire, d'envisager la Physique & l'Histoire Naturelle. Mr. de Réaumur est extrêmement diffus, il s'appesantit sur les moindres détails: témoins les Mémoires sur les Insectes. Je tâche au contraire d'abréger, d'être court. Je ne rapporte que les détails nécessaires (Vol. XXVI (1738), pp. 151-152)

Now these ill-chosen remarks - and especially the last sentence - were not calculated to endear him to his "old friend", and they presented the journalist with a wonderful opportunity of making unfavourable comparisons between the "brevity" of Deslandes and the thoroughness of the abler scientist. The Chevalier takes full advantage of the situation, and replies to Deslandes's letter in the next article of the same issue (Art. X). He claims that he did not mean to abuse Deslandes, but merely to point out the obvious fact that the work would have been improved if Réaumur had read it through in MSS and made suggestions. The expression "Elève de Mr. de Réaumur" was intended as a compliment, and he is surprised it was not taken as such. If Deslandes treats his "friends" in this way, he wonders how he deals with his enemies! After all, he adds, Réaumur us "un Savant du prémier ordre [sic]" (p. 158). He has not said there was no merit in the work, but that it would have been better if Réaumur had scanned it before publication: most people would agree with the latter rather than the former judgement! Deslandes has been at great pains to point out that he and Réaumur had different methods: is he suggesting, he asks, that his methods are superior? (p. 159).

Thus Deslandes is made to look rather ridiculous about the whole affair, principally because he has been too proud to acknowledge that his "friend" is a better writer and a more experienced experimenter than himself. The debate is rounded off, detrimentally to poor Deslandes, by an article from Mr. XX, reviewer of other parts of the Recueil, who had called in the Chevalier to criticize the work in general terms (Art. XI). Once more the opportunity is

grasped. Mr. XX apologizes to his colleague for having attracted to him " la vanité & la mauvaise humeur de Mr. Deslandes" (p. 163); and he points out something that has been painfully obvious to the reader - namely that Deslandes has exposed himself to the soundest beating from an able critic, who "n'est jamais plus à son aise, & n'a plus lieu d'être content, que lorsque son Antagoniste est obligé d'avoir recours à la mauvaise foi, & à des aveux humiliants pour lui répondre". And he adds, derisively:

> Si Mr. Deslandes avoit lû votre Extrait, Monsieur, avec plus de calme, & un peu moins de bonne opinion de lui-même, il n'auroit pas confondu, ce qu'un Ecolier de quatre jours auroit aisément distingué. Pauvre Philosophie, que la moindre contradiction met en feu, & qui s'évapore en fumée! (Vol XXVI, p. 163).

Poor "philosopher" too, who had been made to look so silly in this indirect clash with the greater scientist! We do not know what Réaumur thought about remarks made by Deslandes in the heat of controversy, but there is no further contact between them. In 1748, however, Deslandes reveals a certain degree of hostility towards his former friend: in a foot-note to the Essay sur la Marine des Anciens of that year, we come across a passage in which Réaumur is ridiculed for an alleged suggestion that an oyster can lead a happy and philosophical life! (ed. 1748, pp. 291-292, n.(e)).

In assessing the biographical significance of the period of Deslandes's service in Brest we must take into account the monographs and the correspondence with Bignon and Réaumur. Now the most obvious fact that emerges from these is the author's versatility and diversity of interests; ranging, in the letters to the Royal Librarian, from the height of church-towers to the meaning of Celtic words; in the letters to Réaumur, from mosses that rot trees to the menhirs at Carnac; in the monographs, from artillery-fire to shrimps. All this is in character; for had Deslandes been less versatile in his interests, he would have been

untrue to his own definition of a "philosophe" (H.c.,II, 327). And yet this impressive diversity does not exclude professional conscientiousness. He is repeatedly anxious to show his concern for naval efficiency, and, however much he may secretly dislike routine duties, he never fails to apply himself to the more intellectual aspects of his job.

Secondly, we note the proud independence of the man who, as author of the Recueil of 1736, is too arrogant and self-sufficient to admit his indebtedness to Réaumur the scientist, however much he esteems Réaumur the man. This arrogance and independence, and the quickness to resent a suspected insult (noted in the debate in the Bibliothèque française) were to make him enemies and lose him friends in the future. On the credit side, of course, we note the likeable traits in the man's nature: the eagerness (sometimes imprudent and harmful to himself) to assist the enterprizing but obscure; and the refusal to allow necessary deference - prompted partly by a sincere desire to escape from the provinces - to degenerate into a grovelling self-abasement, destructive of principles and personal views:

A la grandeur altiere
Je n'ai jamais offert des voeux:
Oui, mon ame est trop fiere,
Pour encenser un vice heureux. (Mon Cabinet, in H.c.,IV,197)

Bearing this in mind, we shall not be surprised to find him championing the cause of the "illustres malheureux" in 1751.

Thirdly, we have discovered a little about the conditions under which he lived in Brest - the financial difficulties occasioned by the John Law débâcle, especially for a man living far away from Paris, where it was possible to make huge fortunes at that time as well as to lose them; the dampness of the climate and the physical isolation, due to bad roads rendered impassible in winter, which, with intellectual isolation helped to accentuate the eagerness to return to civilization. Moreover, in the fact that Bignon did nothing to hasten his return we may perceive the source of much of our author's later bitterness on the subject of worthy intellectuals abandoned by their "protectors".

In general, we may say that, in the documents under review, there is some evidence of evolution of character. From 1714 onwards we witness a man face to face with the reality of routine employment, and consequently more serious than when he jocularly treated the question, dying with a smile on one's lips. For instance: in the autobiographical Mon Cabinet, the jovial hedonist gives way to the serious free-thinker. Death is no longer a matter for levity, but is envisaged as a step into nothingness. He is more serious, then; but he is also beginning to take himself more seriously too. A new note of pride creeps in - pride in independence of mind, and pride in recollection of contact with famous thinkers, like Newton and Malebranche. Thus Mon Cabinet, composed about the time of the publication of his two major and best-known works, is the very image of Deslandes on the threshold of fifty and surveying his new study in Rochefort (see Recueil de différens traités, ed. 1753, p. 75 n.).

CHAPTER V ROCHEFORT

Philosophe par goût, libertin par système...
Loin de Paris, je mène une indolente vie,
Je goûte les plaisirs où l'âge me convie,
Mais je m'en défens les excès. (Poem A Monsieur de C..., in Dialogue pourquoi il est si difficile, etc.,1745)

...il avoit été dans sa jeunesse & dans la force de son âge très-satyrique, très mordant, très-habile à saisir les ridicules, très-prompt à les mettre au jour;...cette causticité lui avoit fait beaucoup d'ennemis, & voit nui à son avancement dans la Marine (Fréron, Ann. Litt., 1757,V, pp.162-163).

...j'ai craint de nouvelles contradictions de la part de ceux que blesse toute vérité dite hardiment. J'en avois essuyé d'une autre sorte de la part de quelques personnes, qui croyoient que l'amour de la Philosophie ne pouvoit s'allier avec l'esprit & le maniment des affaires...(H.c. IV, 1756, Avertissement).

a) Professional and Financial Troubles

In 1736 Deslandes was to have promotion to the unhealthy, marsh-bound town of Rochefort,[56] which he soon disliked because he found the inhabitants thick-headed and the wine thin, and because his health suffered from the summer epidemics of fever, and from the lack of good spring-water.[57] In September 1738 we read that had just recovered from an illness (Arch. port de Roch., I E, 128, p. 577); and in the closing lines of the Optique des moeurs of 1742, he repeats his familiar lament about being "malheureusement confiné en province". As we may well suspect, this discontent was not caused purely by Rochefort itself; for Deslandes was ever convinced that his true vocation was with the intellectuals. Note, for example, how he expressed himself soon after his arrival in his new post:

Quiconque a le courage de se mettre au-dessus des préjugés vulgaires, & qui fidèle à la raison, ne fait point dependre son bonheur de ce que les autres pensent; celui-là, dis-je, conçoit aisément pour les affaires la double haine & d'homme d'esprit & de Philosophe. Comme il n'aspire point à ces embarras illustres..., il ne s'occupe que du soin de sa perfection. Ce qui lui paroît vivre, c'est se procurer de nouvelles connoissances: il ne compte que par-là ses années (H.c., I, 338).

Revealing sentiments, indeed! As Commissaire-Général he could not hope to escape these "embarras illustres", referred

to again in the Hymne à la Paresse (in H.c., IV, p. 202) which clearly has to do with the same period of his life ("...au milieu d'un embarras illustre,/J'approchai sans regret de mon dixiéme lustre"). There lay the professional and psychological problem: the urge to write was so strong that he approached his naval duties with "hatred" after he had established himself as a scientist and historian of philosophy at the beginning of his sojourn in Rochefort - a period which is marked by the considerable literary activity revealed in the following facts:

1736 Recueil de différens traités etc.
1737 Histoire critique de la philosophie (first 3 vols.) [58]
1741 Pigmalion, ou la statue animée
1742 L'Optique des moeurs etc.
1743 Essay sur la marine & sur les commerce
1745 Lettre sur le luxe; Fragments d'un auteur grec, Dialogue pourquoi il est si difficile etc.

How well, then, did he succeed in serving two masters? [59] The Archives of the French Navy and the port of Rochefort allow us to piece together the story after 1739, and to determine the extent to which literary preoccupations affected his efficiency as a naval executive.

On June 4th 1739 Deslandes is given responsibility for the administration (détail) of the port, handed over to him by Beauharnais. During July complaints begin to pour in from Versailles: first, regarding the poor quality of cloth that has passed through his hands; secondly, concerning inferior wood which he has judged satisfactory; thirdly, about thefts from the naval stores; fourthly, the fact that, during working hours, dock-yard employees are making goods to sell in the town. In August he is reminded that ships departing for the colonies should have their cannons set up in batteries, and not stored in the hold of the ship; that the Apollon must be fitted out as soon as possible, and that the Naval Minister, Maurepas, would like a list of smaller craft in the port. In September the reminder about the Apollon is repeated, and Deslandes is told that, instead of allowing Rochefort to run out of coal, he should have taken steps to have some brought from La Rochelle. In the same

month he is reprimanded for not rendering account of work performed by one "Lefévre," (of whom we are to hear a good deal in the near future). Likewise, he is upbraided for not demanding a receipt from the Commissaire de Magasin, Macnemara, for naval instruments; and the latter, whom Deslandes has blamed for not supplying a receipt, is exonerated by Maurepas. In addition, he is asked to give reasons why departure from established practices has given rise to the escape of two smugglers from the naval prison, and is ordered to make good damage caused during the escape.

October is even worse. On 3rd, Macnemara complains that, when it arrived at the Ile d'Aix, the Néréide was in a leaking condition, and Deslandes is told not to let such incidents occur again. In fact Maurepas takes measures to ensure that they will not happen in the near future, for on 6th he sends Ricouart to prepare to take over the détail of the port of Rochefort. An equally serious cause of concern at this time is to be found in the very outspoken protest of the Commissaire-Général d'Artillerie, Desherbiers de Letanduere, (which we print in entirety in a note 60) consisting of complaints from an officer of equal rank concerning the alleged usurpation by Deslandes of the prerogatives of the Artillery Officer. In particular, the Naval Officer's overbearing attitude and indifference to the professional code of the service are resented. From the letter of Letanduere it also transpires that, on May 25th and on June 8th, this person has already hinted at the desirability of defining the powers of the Naval Officer; and that now the only way to maintain good relations is to keep Ricouart in his present post and make sure that Deslandes will never occupy it again.

This protest, and probably Deslandes's negligence too, have their effect: there follows a lengthy period during which the memoranda from Versailles are addressed to Ricouart. However, after a year and a half, Ricouart finds it necessary to abandon the administration of the port, which, despite Letanduere's pointed recommendations, is handed back to

Deslandes. The new term of office begins well. The Commissaire is praised for the excellence of his memoranda and for the good quality of gun-powder recently acquired; he is praised moreover for despatching a cast-iron pump to Bigot de la Mothe and for providing Boldini with facilities for experimenting; and, on 25th July 1741, Maurepas approves investigation of a spring of water discovered during construction of new latrines at the military hospital. In August harmony continues to reign; but, on September 8th, Deslandes is taken to task for changing the plans of the work at the hospital, without first securing Court approval. In this matter our sympathies must surely lie with the provincial administrator, constantly thrown into perplexity by lack of speedy communication and transport. In the latter connection, consider the letter of November 22nd 1741:

Le retardement qu'il y a eu, Monsieur, dans les envoyes qui ont esté faits les années dères des plantes et graines qui arrivent à Rochefort et qui sont destinées pour le jardin du Roy à Paris, estant cause que la plusparт de ces plantes et graines ont perdu beaucoup de leur qualité, il est absolument necessaire que vous ayiez attention à faire charger au messager et sans perdre de tems, toutes les plantes mises dans la mousse et toutes les graines qui sont arrivées et qui arriveront dans la suite à Rochefort, et à l'égard des plantes qui viennent enterrées dans des bailles ou caisses, il faudra que vous les fassiez remettre sur le champ à M. Dupuy (Arch. Nat., (Marine) B^2 314, f^{o} 386).

Nevertheless, Deslandes's administration continues until June 13th 1742 - a fact which suggests that former disfavour is now forgotten. Some complaints are made, of course; and the letter of June 13th (from Versailles) expresses the Naval Minister's relief at Ricouart's resumption of duty. It is not with surprise, therefore, that we mention at this point that Deslandes's request for renewal in his favour of his deceased father's letters of nobility[61] does not appear to have been successful.

Not until 29th June of the following year is he asked once more to take over the détail of Rochefort. By this time another sort of difficulty comes to the fore: provincial expenditure is being subjected to rigorous scrutiny, and it is clear that an "economy-drive" is in operation. On August

19th, Deslandes is taken to task for excessive cost of repair to the Gironde and the Ardent; on September 19th, he is asked to explain why some estimated costs have now been increased. Finally, on 11th December, a communication to Deslandes acknowledges receipt of his letter informing Maurepas that (on the third of the month) the détail has been returned to Ricouart. This time, his term of office has been very brief, and, what is more, he is never again to be entrusted with this responsibility. For this there were good reasons, since it was about this time that the Essay sur la marine et sur le commerce (1743), undertaken with the secret support of Maurepas, incurred the displeasure of the Court of Versailles. The immediate repercussions brought about his dismissal from responsibility for the détail of the port. The more distant repercussions were far more serious, and were intensified by the fact that, in the interim, he had published another attack upon the Court in the shape of the Lettre sur le luxe of 1745. A letter of November 14th 1746, addressed to Ricouart, makes the situation brutally clear:

Je vous adresse Monsieur un congé pour M. Deslandes que je vous prie de lui remettre et au moyen duquel il ne peut estre ordonnateur dans le port en votre absence, soit qu'il s'en serve ou ne s'en serve pas. J'ay destiné M. de Guiry, Commissaire general de Brest, pour aller ordonner en sa place á Rochefort, je luy mande de s'y rendre au plustot et l'intention du Roy est que vous ne quittiez le port qu'après son arrivée et luy avoir remis le soin des affaires dont vous estes chargées [sic]... (Arch. du port de R., I E, 142).

His Majesty will have no more of this out-spoken servant, who is now in disgrace and invited to resign. The dossier of Deslandes in the Archives de la Marine continues the story:

Le s, Deslandes ancien commissaire de la marine supplie de lui permettre de se retirer n'estant plus en estat de continuer ses services et de luy accorder la jouissance de ses appointemens pendant sa vie. Les commissaires generaux qui se sont retirés cy-devant ont obtenu la même grâce (Arch. Nat. (Marine), C^{7} 85, dated Dec. 1746)

A MSS comment is added:

Ce qu'il expose est véritable. Les Srs Belliard, Pelissier et Charron retirés cy-devant ont été traités de mesme et ont obtenu leurs appointemens moitié sur la marine et moitié sur les invalides, il paroist juste de les luy accorder.

Apparently, at first at least, his request was granted, and in 1747 it is recorded: "216 l. 13 s. 4 d. au S. Deslandes, Comnissaire general de la marine pour appointemens omis dans les Etats. De Par le Roy". Then, on 31st March 1748, a further document reads:

> Trésorier général de la marine Mr. Marcel françois Zacharie de Settes payés comptant des deniers de vôtre exercice de l'année 1747, au S. Deslandes commissaire general de la marine retiré du service suivant la permission à luy accordée par nôtre ordre du 1er Decembre 1746, la somme de deux cent seize livres treize sols quatre deniers que nous luy avons ordonnée et ordonnons pour supplément des appointemens qui luy ont été assignés par les Etats expediés pour ceux des officers réformés des C. de S. mois 1746, et l'année entière - 1747...

A note scribbled at the bottom, however, appears to represent "a anuller" [sic], and we may well wonder whether, in 1748, Deslandes's emoluments were not suspended. The reason for this cancellation may perhaps be found in the effects of his quarrel with the Jesuit Valois during 1747-48, and which may possibly have had repercussions at Court unfavourable to the ex-Commissaire, accused of irreligion now, and long since discredited for neglecting the service for private affairs and for imprudently making himself the mouthpiece of the would-be reformer, Maurepas. Whatever the real explanation - and it may be a combination of all three - the fact stands that professionally and financially he was the loser.

Financial loss at this time was particularly unfortunate. The family papers explain why (739/22/73-77 and 85-109): we learn that, by October 1745, André-François, resident in Rochefort, had contracted with the merchant of La Rochelle, Marc-Antoine Lefèvre (with whom, as we have seen, he had already had official dealings in 1739) a debt of some 965 livres, incurred partly for supplies of commodities like cotton, chocolate, wax etc, and partly through payment, on Deslandes's behalf, of a credit-note for the sum of 700 livres to some person un-named (739/22/107). Now, at the end of the year 1746, the Commissaire, having been obliged to resign his commission, had already sold some of his furniture and effects. For, in January 1747, certain items listed in an "addition à la vente des meubles d'André-François Boureau-Deslandes" appear in the records; and the

inclusion of two hundred and forty-four volumes from the library he prized so highly[62] only serves to underline the urgency and the desperate nature of this expedient (739/22/107). With Lefèvre he left a promissory note, written in his own hand and worded as follows:

Arrêté le présent compte à la somme de neuf cent soixante et cinq livres deux sols neuf deniers: laquelle somme je promets payer à Monsieur Marc-Antoine le Febvre à sa volonté. A la Rochelle ce premier janvier mil sept cent quarente sept. (739/22/96)

To this a post-script is appended, again in Deslandes's hand: "Laditte somme sera payée sur la vente des meubles et effets que je laisse à Rochefort." And on the back of the paper we find the debtor's Paris address, "rue des Vieux Augustins à l'hôtel de Beauvois" - to-day Nº 68, Rue François Miron, near the Hôtel de Ville.

Even after the Commissaire's retirement to the capital, the affair dragged on. In October 1749, a solicitor named Bourlet was engaged to plead for Deslandes - with no success, for on January 8th 1750 judgement was entered in favour of Lefèvre, Deslandes admitting his indebtedness to the extent of 653 livres, 2 sols, 9 deniers (300 livres having been paid) and asking for deferment of obligation. Now this payment by instalment, though apparently approved by the creditor, did not proceed with complete regularity or punctuality. On the 21st May 1750, Deslandes received the following pointed note from his attorney, Dufour:

> Monsieur,
> Vous savez que le premier terme en est le 17 de ce mois et la moitié de ce que vous devez à Mr. Lefevre de la Rochelle et mes frais pour lesquels je ne devois pas attendre si long tems. Je vous prie de venir payer parce qu'on me presse beaucoup...(739/22/75).

And, to reinforce the last point, Dufour added a line on the outside requesting that his client should pay the bearer of the note! If the debt was ever paid off in full we do not know. On 17th September 1750, it is recorded that 63 livres, 2 sols, 9 deniers had been handed over, leaving about 600 livres to be paid - not a very heavy debt, but an unwelcome burden for one living in straitened circumstances.

Certainly, towards the end of his period of duty in Rochefort, our author's fortunes and prestige had deteriorated to such a degree that his retirement must surely have been attended neither with honour nor with riches; and later, when he so often stressed that the wise man prizes nothing but "philosophy," he was partly making a virtue out of a necessity.

b) Quarrels relating to the Rochefort period and to his membership of two Academies of Science.

We have noted the unfortunate professional and financial circumstances in which Deslandes found himself at the end of his service at Rochefort. These, we suggest, were to some extent the result of his interests and of his character at this time - interests which, though certainly not always diverging from those proper to a commissaire, were often too digressive and sometimes too lofty to allow complete obedience to the mundane demands of his office. This state of affairs must be attributed to the anterior influences: first, to the hedonism of his schooldays; secondly, his recurrent regret that he had been forced to decline the freedom and tranquillity offered by Malebranche; thirdly, the enthusiasm for free-thinking and for Newtonian scientific method with which he had been fired in London. Anterior influences were also at work in forming his character in middle age: in India and during the London talks, he saw the folly of neglecting the Navy, and in his correspondence with Bignon and Réaumur the efficiency of the Fleet was one of his chief pre-occupations. Consequently in 1743, consulting the good of the state, he launches upon a project of agitation for reform. Yet this man, who was so proud to have come into contact with famous persons, now shows excessive confidence in the good-will of the great, and is embittered by disillusionment at the end of it all. He is successful as an author and develops a kind of conceit regarding his ability; but he is unsuccessful in his routine work and in money matters.

He is moreover isolated and lonely. In 1742 we read that he is still a bachelor and the family papers suggest that he remained so. Again in 1742 he describes himself as "malheureusement confiné en province" (last page of the Critique des moeurs), and, since Paris is still beyond his grasp, nurses a grievance that makes him quick to resent a supposed insult. In other words: loneliness, pride and disillusionment have bred a combative personality, illustrated clearly in his quarrels with Mairan and Valois, which, though centred mainly around the years 1747-48, are none the less (unlike the Réaumur incident) related to his period of service in Rochefort.

Jean-Jacques Dortous de Mairan was eleven years Deslandes's senior and he did not take up residence in Paris until after the latter's departure for Brest. They must, however, have heard about each other, for they shared the acquaintance of Fontenelle, Malebranche and Lagny, and Mairan frequented the circle of Madame de Lambert. What is more: they had ample opportunities for reading each other's contributions to the publications of the Academy of Science. There were important differences between them: Mairan opposed Musschenbrock's Newtonian ideas and defended Cartesian physics (J.des S., Amst., Sept. 1739, pp. 82-83); and, although like Deslandes he was destined to spend part of his life in a provincial town, he appears to have made his mark in Paris and to have enjoyed the favour of the great. For instance: it was through the benevolent interest of the Chancellier d'Aguesseau that Mairan secured the directorship of the Journal des savants; he also enjoyed the protection of the Prince de Conti, and had so far ingratiated himself with the Regent that the latter left him a watch in token of his esteem.

Indeed, it was perhaps through such influential acquaintances that in 1720 - only two years after his election to the Academy of Science - Mairan was invited, with Varignon, to undertake the task of selecting the best method of measuring

the capacity of a ship:

L'Académie ayant été chargée en 1720, par ordre de S.A.R.M. le Regent, & sur la demande de S.A.S. M. le Comte de Toulouse Amiral de France, Chef du Conseil de Marine, de déterminer une Methode pour le jaugeage des Navires, ou d'examiner entre celles qui sont connuës, quelle étoit la plus sûre & la plus utile pour la pratique; & ayant reçu à cette occasion plusieurs Mémoires & Piéces instructives, avec les Methodes pratiquées jusqu'ici dans les differens Ports du Royaume, &chés les Etrangers, elle nomma pour cet examen deux Commissaires, qui furent M. Varignon, & moi (Mém. Ac. Sc., Ann. 1724,p 335).

Now one of the mémoires on this subject to which Mairan refers had been submitted to the Academy in August 1717 by Deslandes, whose method may be summed up as follows:

He begins by objecting to the handing over of this practical matter to geometricians lacking in experience. The calculation of jaugeage, he argues, is not the measurement of the liquid capacity of a ship, especially as a ship's hold is not a regular body. Thus it is useless to treat a ship as one would treat a barrel. In the case of a vessel, the weight it will have to bear (including rigging) is as important a factor as the volume of the hold. The maximum loading-line should be a little below the line of the fort - that is, at its widest point.

Bearing these considerations in mind, the method he proposes depends on a simple principle of mechanics, namely that a floating body displaces the volume of water it weighs. If therefore we can calculate the weight of water displaced in loading, it will represent the weight of the cargo. He therefore suggests that we should regard the two water-levels, before and after loading(but in any case with the ship fully rigged), as the top and bottom surfaces of the solid representing the water displaced in loading. And if, in addition, we know the width of the vessel and the difference between the two water-lines, we shall have the three dimensions required, the surface area being taken as the mean between the two horizontal planes.

He admits that it is going to be difficult to persuade people to make the rather complicated calculation of the horizontal planes. He therefore suggests a different proceeduro, which consists in dividing the solid to be measured into a centre piece, which will be regarded as a parallelpiped, and two curved extremities, which will be treated as parabolas in ordinary ships and as semicircular bodies in the case of flutes. After this there remains the task of multiplying the cubic feet by the weight of one cubic foot of sea-water, and dividing the product by 2,000 in order to express the result in tonneaux de mer (Arch. Ac. Sc., dossier: Deslandes, pièce 1 - 12 pp. et une figure).

We have given this method in some detail for two reasons: first, because it appears in a manuscript which is difficult to come by; secondly, because it is only by comparing it with the technique ultimately adopted by Mairan that we can understand the origins of Deslandes's grudge against him. How, then, did Mairan come to decide the best method? As colleague of Varignon, who saw the problem purely as that of measuring an abstract figure, he was careful not to insult geometricians;

yet he was careful too to make the same point that we find in Deslandes's mémoire, namely that the weight of cargo is of greater importance than the volume it occupies, and, having considered all the techniques proposed, he preferred to "prendre le Jaugeage ou le port d'un Navire par le solide d'eau que sa charge lui fait déplacer" (Hist. Ac. Sc. 1721, pp. 54 sqq.). Above all he preferred to consider methods actually in operation and to choose one that was most representative and most practical. In other words, he came to conclusions similar to those reached by Deslandes. But he did not mention the proposals made by this Commissaire in August 1717, and adopted instead an almost identical system recommended by Hocquart of Toulon on the 25th of the previous month, and which may be summed up thus:

> When a ship is sufficiently laden the water-line is about a foot below the line of the fort. If, then, we can measure the solid contained between this plane and the plane at the water-line when the ship is unloaded, we can calculate the volume of water that the weight of its load causes it to displace.

From this point the system is exactly that suggested one month later by Deslandes, except that Hocquart regards the areas occupied by bow and stern as composed of two frusta of a pyramid, which are easier to calculate than parabolas. But he does say that if one cares to consider these areas as parabolas, the result will be at least as good (Hist. Ac. Sc.,1721, p.60). Thus in all major respects the technique proposed by Hocquart, and adopted by Mairan on behalf of the commission, was identical with that of Deslandes. In a mémoire of 1724, Mairan explained that Varignon's method was not considered by the Count of Toulouse to be as good as that which Mairan had adopted from Hocquart and which had been tested by Bouguer, Hydrographer of Crousic. This, he explained, was because of the simplicity and practicability of the chosen method, established moreover by experiments upon this and other systems, carried out at Bordeaux and Agde during 1723. Later he drew up a simple outline of the Hocquart technique, and having shown it to his new colleague Lagny (replacing Varignon who had died)

submitted it to the Academy of Science in August 1724, by which date the whole affair was brought to an end(Hist. Ac. Sc., 1725, pp. 139-140).

However satisfied the Academy may have been, Deslandes appears to have been far from pleased at the way the matter had been handled, and reacted in different ways to the Academy and to Mairan. In considering first his relations with the Academy, we must take into account his unfortunate attitude to Réaumur in 1737 as well as his grudge about the jaugeage affair. The fact is that,after 1736, none of his scientific writings bear the mention "Membre de l'Académie des Sciences", and even in the Recueil of 1736 he allows himself to vent his spleen on geometricians who, theorizing upon naval techniques of which they have no practical knowledge, seek their own glorification rather than the advancement of naval science (p. 79, n.(a)). Then, in Fréron's obituary notice, we read:

> Le jeune Deslandes fut conduit à Paris à l'âge de treize ans, & nommé de bonne heure Elève de l'Académie des Sciences; mais dans la suite, soit que ce genre d'occupation lui déplût, soit qu'on lui eût donné quelque sujet de mécontentement ou qu'il crût en avoir, il demanda que son nom fût rayé de la liste des Académiciens; ce qui ne se refuse jamais (Ann. Litt., 1757, V, p. 159).

If we were pressed to assign a date to this resignation (not indicated in the present records of the Academy) we should be inclined to point to some time shortly after 1740, when Mairan succeeded Fontenelle as Permanent Secretary of the Academy - surely a bitter pill for Deslandes to swallow! The latest acceptable date would presumably be 1742, for in the Optique des moeurs of that year we note this bitter comment (ostensibly from the lips of the Abbé Ziani):

> "...si Messieurs de l'Académie Royale des Sciences ne chercheront point à les décrier, leur usage étant de s'opposer à tout ce qui ne vient pas de quelqu'un d'entr'eux" (p. 203).

From this it would perhaps appear that the elevation of Mairan to a coveted post in the world of science had revived an old grudge, which obviously had something to do with the alleged exclusiveness of the Academy and most probably with the jaugeage affair.

The quarrel was re-opened in 1748, when, in certain lines of his Essay sur la marine des Anciens,[63] Deslandes made derisive remarks about the method of jaugeage selected by Mairan. Clearly he had not forgotten his quarrel with the Academy on this subject and was annoyed about the impractible techiques considered and praised at the time the decision was taken:

> Il y a quelques années qu'on fit sur cela beaucoup de recherches, & qu'on consulta des Mathematiciens de réputation, qui accoûtumés aux calculs algébriques & aux suppositions arbitraires, fournirent des méthodes allongées sous le nom de formules générales, dont la Marine ne s'est jamais servi. Ils en furent pourtant loués &...récompensés (pp. xxiv-xxv). [ed. 1748]

This utterance, obviously dictated by considerable professional experience and not a little personal spite, could not fail to annoy. In July Deslandes apologized, claiming that he had not intended to attack either Mairan or the Academy. In August, however, an uncomplimentary review of the Essay appeared in the Journal des savants. Thinking Mairan the author of this article, Deslandes composed a brochure protesting against the injustice that had been done. Now, unfortunately this document was not read only by the small circle of personal friends for whom it was intended, and the quarrel blazed up anew. Indeed, it was not until the following April that Deslandes finally made an even humbler apology, which brought the whole affair to a close (see M. de Tr., Jul. 1748, pp. 1359-99; J. des S.,Paris Aug.1748, pp. 491-500; J. des S., Paris, 1749, p. 203).

Many of the details we have given are purely technical. As such they would be tedious and irrelevant, if they did not explain this rather stupid quarrel between the successful Mairan and the thwarted and disillusioned Deslandes, and if the dispute itself did not show us a man ever ready to do battle if he considerd himself disdained or insulted.

The Académie des Sciences, Belles-lettres et Arts of La Rochelle was created by letters patent in April 1732, with the same statutes as that of Angers. Amongst the thirty-odd members on the roll of that body there appeared, after the meeting of September 2nd 1739, that of Bourreau-Deslandes,[64] whose Discours sur l'utilité des académies, read before a public session of 4th May 1740, was applauded by the Journal des Savants in these terms:

> C'est le compliment que M. Deslandes, commissaire général de la Marine, prononça devant l'Académie de La Rochelle le jour de sa réception. On y trouve beaucoup d'esprit & de politesse & des louanges qui ont d'autant moins de fadeur qu'elles semblent n'être données qu'à titre d'instructions (ed. Amst., May 1741, p. 44).

Thus, in this provincial academy, Deslandes appears to have achieved some measure of oratorical fame, which may have inspired jealousy in members of longer standing. Father Yves Valois, S.J., professeur d'hydrographie à l'école de La Rochelle, though younger than Deslandes, had been a member of the Academy since its inception in 1732. Moreover, his outlook was diametrically opposed to that of the Commissaire-Général; for, whereas the latter was dividing his time somewhat unequally between the Navy and free-thinking, Valois in the full fervour of "righteous" endeavour was using his post at the naval school as a platform for propagation of the "true Faith".

The two were almost bound to clash.[65] For instance, Valois must have read our author's Réflexions of 1712, understood some of the implications of certain passages of the Histoire critique de la philosophie, guessed the authorship of Pigmalion and noted anti-clerical sentiments expressed in the Critique des moeurs. Surely none of these publications would escape the vigilant eye of a Jesuit hydrographer, progressively disquieted at the popularity of free-thinking amongst members of His Majesty's Navy. Indeed, it was to stem this tide that, in 1747, the Reverend Father produced his Entretiens sur les vérités fondamentales de la religion pour l'instruction des

officiers & gens de mer,[66] dedicated to the Duke of Penthièvre, Grand-Amiral et Gouverneur de Bretagne. This work, which takes the form of conversations between people on the high seas, has an obviously dogmatic tone, as the Dessein suggests:

> Dans ces conversations...on va mettre sous les yeux les points fondamentaux d'une Religion qu'il faut apprendre aux ignorans, faire goûter aux esprits indifférens, défendre contre les raisonnemens faux ou captieux du déïste ou du libertin (I,xv).

To achieve this, he brings before the reader a chaplain, a missionary, a passenger, a Creole returning to Ste. Domingo, a pilot, a businessman, the captain of the ship, a naval lieutenant and so on. Usually the attack is directed against libertines in general, but there are passages in which it is clear that certain categories of free-thinkers are under fire from this resolute Jesuit. For instance; at one point we find the Lieutenant and the Captain discussing current publications. The conversation turns first to the question of "thinking matter":

> Le Lieutenant Vous n'avez donc pas oüi dire aussi bien que moi à M **** que les parties subtilisées du corps, de notre sang, par exemple, peuvent par des arrangemens fins & delicats s'élever jusqu'à la faculté de penser? j'ai retenu ses propres termes, & il me semble qu'il nous prouvoit assez bien que nous ne sommes que corps.
>
> Le Capitaine Ne veux-tu pas parler de cet Officier de haut-bord qui se mocquant de l'avenir, nous débitoit gravement sa morale impie sur l'usage que nous devons faire de la vie présente, & qui s'efforçoit de nous persuader que la crainte de la mort vient de l'horreur que nous avons tous pour le néant? (2e. part., 5ème Entr. pp. 26-27).

Now, even though he may not have Deslandes in mind in inventing this conversation, there is no doubt that the subjects under discussion are to be found in the Réflexions, Mon Cabinet and Pigmalion. There is, however, something much more definite in a foot-note to an earlier page:

> ...l'auteur dit qu'il n'écrit pas pour la multitude, mais pour un petit nombre de gens qui sçavent penser & que l'esprit élève au-dessus du vulgaire....Ainsi fait encore M. D*** & tant d'autres Ecrivains d'une philosophie singuliere qui se croyent nés pour venger le bon sens, & pour être restaurateurs de la raison humaine, dans des Ecrits tranchans, décisifs, ébloüissans, admirés cependant & courus d'une espece d'honnêtes gens antichrêtiens (1ere Part., 1er Entr.,p.53,n.)

In this passage concerned with "les mauvais livres qu'on trouve sur les vaisseaux" the author referred to is the English deist Mandeville (whose ideas Deslandes found

attractive in 1751). We also note the use of Deslandes's favourite pseudonym, M. D***, and a clear reference to his most cherished notions: the indispensability of a secret doctrine, and the vindication of reason for the benefit of the honnêtes gens who represent all that is best in human society.

Feeling that he could not let such remarks pass, Deslandes replied in the following year, by publishing what has now become one of the rarest of his works, the Lettre de M. D*** à M. ****, Trésorier de France, which, in anticipation, is prefaced by the Latin tag: Maledicendi fas est remaledicere. There is also an Avertissement, giving the substance of a point of view he is anxious to sustain before Martin de Chassiron, Trésorier de France et conseiller d'honneur au présidial de La Rochelle, to whom the letter is almost certainly addressed, since he was a "leading light" in the provincial academy (see Moréri, Dict. ed. 1759, art: La Rochelle). It is in this Avertissement that the author reviews three ways in which calumny can be rebuffed: first, by having recourse to a magistrate; second, by disdaining to reply to an accuser who uses no bienséance in his arguments; third, by unmasking the hypocrite who has dared to deliver such an attack and by meeting lies with reasoned argument. But, having said all this, Deslandes does not decide which of the three methods he will choose, concluding that all three are valid in certain circumstances. On the whole, however, it transpires that he is using part of the third technique - he is unmasking the hypocrite without providing much in the way of reasoned argument.

At the beginning, the text is cautiously worded. The author concedes that to defend religion is a noble and worthy gesture; yet (he adds) ~~es~~ few people are capable of undertaking such a task without resorting to base vituperation, or without allowing ignoble jealousy to prejudice their judgement (a notion to which significantly he returns in the Recueil of 1753, p.xvii). He claims that it is not

so serious if a man writes about geometry, mechanics or the art of piloting a ship (all of which Valois had taught or written upon) without knowing what he is talking about. Ignorance of these things is dealt with automatically, since people do not care to read such works. Religion appears, however, to be regarded as a class apart, kept inviolable by the very nature of the subject. Thus it is apparently of little avail to despise an author who treats this subject, even an author who is "apprivoisé avec ce qu'il y a de plus vil dans la société" and who none the less dares to rank himself with Bossuet, Fénelon, Abbadie, Clarke, Bentley or the pious recluses of Port Royal - apologists truly worthy of respect:

> Ils convainquent l'esprit; ils s'insinuent dans le coeur. La vérité est assise sur leurs lèvres: la vertu se communique à tout ce qui les approche & les environne (p.6).

Then, after a warm tribute paid to each of these writers or groups, he declares:

> Voilà, Monsieur, les hommes à qui il est permis d'élever la voix. Que tous les autres se taisent. Ces hommes ont d'ailleurs un avantage, c'est qu'en écrivant pour la Religion, ils suivent à la rigueur tout ce que la Religion prescrit. Ils ne démentent point par leur conduite ce qu'ils établissent dans leurs ouvrages. Ils ont horreur de cette morale artificieuse & relâchée qui tant de fois proscrite dans la capitale du Royaume, ose se reproduire dans les Provinces, de tant de manières différentes (pp. 8-9).

From these provincial Jesuits he now singles out the "hypocrite" he has especially in mind, painting thus a portrait of Father Valois:

> Représentez-vous, par exemple, un Automate avec des yeux éteints, avec une tête presque chauve, avec la physionomie d'un mouton qui s'amuse à rêver: considérez cet Automate qui ne pense point, qui parle grossièrement, & qui écrit plus grossièrement encore; Voyez-le se mouvoir, s'agiter, tourner & retourner ses mains, qui furent autrefois blanches: voyez l'hypocrisie répandue sur tous les plis de sa longue robbe.... Et comment un pareil Automate ose-t-il écrire sur les vérités fondamentales de la Religion? (p.9).

He assumes that Valois has been inspired to his self-appointed task by inferior writings of other Jesuits, like Berruyer, Griffet and Pichon - censured by honest and intelligent Christian apologists, who realize that a certain nobility of presentation is called for when religion is to be defended. In fact, argues Deslandes, for such a task one

must know how to choose one's material and how to employ it in a dignified manner. But another thing must be added to make a convincing apologist: he must also speak with sincerity and act with good-faith. Here, above all, Valois is found wanting: "...et quoi de plus indigne que d'attribuer aux Auteurs qu'on veut combattre des erreurs dont ils sont exemts...; de chercher dans leur conduite ferme, desintéressée & généreuse, des taches qui n'y furent jamais..." (p.11). Particularly are such inuendos resented from one who himself leads a debauched existence:

> Tout cela marque qu'on vit en mauvaise compagnie, avec des espèces de Croates & de Pandoures, qui ne connoissent ni les égards ni les bienséances, ni les principes de cette humanité, que Dieu même a gravée dans toutes les ames bien faites (p.12).

It was chiefly for the enlightenment of sailors that the celebrated Grotius composed his treatise De Veritate Religionis Christianae, which reveals the breadth of his learning and the sincerity of his opinions. How different indeed was Grotius, who:

> ...ménageoit les Auteurs sans les qualifier, avec une insolence brutale, d'Athées & de Déistes. Il croyoit, en un mot, que si la Religion exige le sacrifice de l'esprit, elle n'exige pas moins la politesse des moeurs. Rendre une justice exacte à chacun, ne calomnier personne; dissiper avec bonté les nuages qui font quelquefois chanceler les plus fermes: voilà le véritable caractère du Chrétien. Mais est-ce le caractère du.....? Aussi les Etats Généraux ont-ils fait traduire en Hollandois, & en presque toutes les Langues du monde, le bel Ouvrage de Grotius. Il est vrai qu'ils ne se sont pas servis pour cela des Hydrographes répandus dans leurs Ports: mais ils ont appellé les meilleurs Esprits & les plus sages Ecrivains qu'ils eussent parmi eux (p. 13).

And, after this pointed and disdainful allusion to the hydrographer who had taken upon himself the task of defending religion, he reaches his conclusion: "We are thus in fact in agreement, Mr. Treasurer; since you wish that all pens should be devoted to the service of religion, and I that only the best should be entrusted with responsibility of such importance".

This curious conclusion, like the rest of the letter, is an excellent example of bowing to authority and of paying lip-service to the cause of religion, without yielding one inch of ground to the Jesuit opponent, whose rusticity of

style and ignorance are lumped together with hypocrisy to confound him. The principal charge of deism or atheism is never seriously countered; and Deslandes appears to deny the "errors" to which reference has been made by the Jesuit father. Indeed, it would almost appear that he opposes hypocrisy with a prudence which itself smacks of the same fault. Despite this pretence, however, he gives some indication of his sympathies in the choice of authors contrasted with Valois. There are Catholic apologists - Bossuet, intelligent, reasonable, tolerant in his attempts to convert; Fénelon, by nature humane and benevolent, elegant in expression; Arnauld, modest about his immense erudition and gracious even in the heat of controversy. Remembering the early attractions of the Oratoire, we find it significant that, in 1748, he should prefer what we might call "liberal" Catholicism. There are Protestant apologists too - Grotius, Clarke, Bentley and Abbadie. Remembering therefore his visit to London, we are not surprised that his tastes in polemics should extend to some of the more intelligent and reasonable of the Protestant writers. Here, then, is a writer who is tolerant and liberal indeed, and whose principal targets are fanaticism, hypocrisy, ignorance and rusticity.

The dispute did not fail to have repercussions. For instance, some person composed a MSS poem, at present in the Municipal Library of La Rochelle, attached to their copy of the Lettre of Deslandes:

Relation lamentable des méchans tours du démon à l'encontre du Livre du Pére Valois sur l'air du Pendu

Or Ecoutés petits et grands
L'Histoire d'un Livre excellent
Composé par un honnête homme
et vous allez apprendre comme
un beau jour le diable se prit
pour en empêcher le débit.

Il eut dès le commencement
un fort vilain vomissement
et puis il poussa l'avanture
Jusques aux plus sales ordures
en sorte qu'un pauvre lecteur
se sent toujours bondir le coeur

un aumonier complimenteur
rempli de cette affreuse odeur
vous présente un missionnaire
mais le zèle de ce bon père
A moins la marque d'un chrétien
que la fureur d'un vray payen.

Un Capitaine mathelot
qui dans le fond n'est qu'un vrai sot
aussi bien que M. son frère
Echapé de quelque galère
Viennent pousser des argumens
qui n'ont ni rime ni bon sens

Mais voici de l'esprit malin
Un tour plus adroit et plus fin
avec sa griffe infernale
Il fit des notes marginales
qui sur maint auteur en renom
Distillaient un mortel poison

"notamment M. Deslandes"

Puis il courut dans sa fureur
Les présenter au pauvre auteur
qui croyant parer son ouvrage
en barbouilla toutes les pages
et montra par ce fait fallot
Ce que peut un fin contre un sot

Enfin le démon entreprit
de dénigrer un bel esprit
qui n'est de facile croyance
et qui tout bouffi de vengeance
au lieu d'employer l'air railleur
Le prit sur un ton plein d'aigreur

Pour se venger donc il brocha
certain écrit qu'il envoya
à deux bons trésoriers de France
ou sans pudeur ni conscience
Le digne chef du Pilotin
Est disloqué comme un fantin

Or prions le doux redempteur
qu'il daigne leur changer le coeur
et leur pardonner les injures
dont ils s'accablent sans mesure
afin que devenus amis
Ils aillent droit au Paradis [67]

This doggerel, which bears the scribbled note "Ouvrage ayant appartenu à Martin de Chassiron"[68] (to whom, we suspected, Deslandes's Lettre was addressed), clearly spares neither author in its vulgar and satirical sallies, and certainly shows the degree of ridiculous notoriety they had achieved in the district.

More serious and solid comments on the affair are to be found in the Jansenist press. The Nouvelles ecclésiastiques of March 26th 1748 praises Valois's aim, but finds it unrealized in the Entretiens. If there were not enough good works for the instruction of seamen before 1747, the

same can still be said after the appearance of the Reverend Father's opus, in which one discovers all the prejudices, factual errors and gross calumnies associated with Jesuit polemics. Since, therefore, the author of the Entretiens has been more intent upon misleading simple minds than upon enlightening them, the journalist makes certain suggestions to sailor-readers. Valois has spoken of Richer's famous work on ecclesiastical authority as being "dangerous": the journalist counters "Les Marins qui liront cet endroit, doivent, pour ne s'y pas méprendre, lire aussi la Vie de Riche par M. Bailler". Many times Valois is accused of intentional deception. He has stated, for instance, that questions of dogma are argued only between Catholics and heretics. This cannot be allowed to pass: the journalist asks what this Jesuit, who considers internal wrangles of so little moment, has to say about the question of grace. He goes on to criticize Valois for imitating Pichon, who used the Unigenitus affair to cover his "affreux relâchemens"; and thus brings to a close an article which is highly critical of the Jesuit writer.

By September of the same year, Deslandes's Lettre has come into the possession of the author of this article, who, in the Nouvelles of 17th September, sets to work to comment upon it. It is soon clear that, despite his hostility to Valois's arguments and methods, he does not wholly approve of the way in which Deslandes has undertaken the reply. He notices, for example, that the latter has not made it clear against what he is defending himself:

> Le titre n'annonce point le sujet de la Lettre; mais il est évident que l'Auteur a en vue le Livre du P. Valois, dans lequel il paroît qu'il a été personnellement calomnié, sans qu'on puisse découvrir en quoi, ni comment: en sorte que cela a tout l'air, pour le fond, d'une querelle d'Auteur...(p.152).

Finally, after a short summary of the main points of Deslandes's counter-attack, the journalist begs his reader not to be deterred from reading Valois and judging for himself. Thus, in effect, he regards the Lettre as useless, since it leaves the proper reply still to be made.

Unabashed and unrepentant, Valois continued his crusade against the free-thinkers. For instance, in 1749, to reprove writers like Deslandes, he published his Observations sur les auteurs qui cachent leurs noms par de mauvais motifs; and in 1751-52, when he re-edited his Entretiens, he appears to have eliminated some of the passages considered offensive by Deslandes; only, however, to switch the attack to more recent writings of this author, who had published his Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat (1749) and La Fortune (1751). The author of La Fortune is a fatalist who has absorbed the ideas of Leibnitz, Pope and others. Consequently, Valois violently attacks the disciples of Leibnitz, who spoke of monads and metamorphosis (Entretiens, ed. Lyons, 1752, III, 247, n.(a)); of Pope, who considered that men, like animals, are "determined" in their actions (III, 104); of the "English atheist", Hobbes, who supposed that man-made laws alone can regulate human conduct (IV, pp. 103-104, n. (a)); and he quotes Grotius in opposing fatalism (I, 86) and thus defiantly continues to use a name which Deslandes pounced upon in reviewing the earlier edition of the Entretiens. But there is something much more definite. The author of the Princesse de Montferrat, manifestly a deist, judged that Father Maimbourg "peignoit toujours en faux" and composed with a "faux air de dévotion qui rebute l'esprit & ne touche point le coeur" (op. cit. Préface). Seizing the opportunity of defending a fellow-Jesuit, Valois writes:

> Le disciple declaré & le plagiaire littéral de Baile [Histoire critique de la philosophie], vient de s'élever avec audace contre des témoignages aussi respectables, en turpulinant avec indécence le Père Maimbourg qui les cite avec respect [Préface to Princ. de Mont.] (III, pp. 296-297, n. (b)).

Do we still doubt the object of Valois's antagonism ? There is absolutely conclusive proof on another page. In a bold foot-note to the novel, Deslandes had this to say about the behaviour of the dying Prince:

> On sera peut-être surpris que le Prince de Montferrat n'ait point demandé de Confesseur ni de Prêtre pour l'assister à la mort. Mais on doit se ressouvenir que les moeurs du Clergé étoient si corrompues dans le Xe & le XIe siecle, que tous les honnêtes gens ne se confessoient point. Satisfaits d'élever leur âme à Dieu, ils attendoient tout de sa bonté & de sa justice (p. 94, n.).

Triumphantly Valois seizes upon these remarks:

> Quelques Auteurs zélés gemissent-ils sur l'ignorance & sur les vices de plusieurs Ecclésiastiques du dixième & du onzième siècle? à la première occasion les anti-chrétiens vous disent de sang-froid, que durant ces deux cens ans tous les Ministres de l'Autel ont été si ignorans & si dissolus, que les honnêtes gens ne se confessoient plus qu'à Dieu, & que même les premiers d'un Etat, par exemple, le Marquis de Montferrat, se virent réduits à mourir sans sacremens. Combien d'absurdités à la fois! (III, pp. 35-36, n. (c)).

To this second onslaught Deslandes does not appear to have bothered to reply directly, preferring to copy Ramus who "ne daigna point répondre à ses annemis & se contenta d'avoir raison" (H.c., IV (1756), p. 172). However, in 1756 he cannot altogether forget "ces hommes impétueux qui prennent je ne sçai quelle humeur aigre & sombre pour un excès de zéle, & qui satisfont à leurs passions particulières, en croyant satisfaire aux devoirs de la Religion" (IV, p. 125).

Indeed, it is in this volume of 1756 that we may find a suitable summing up of Deslandes's principal experiences during his service in Rochefort. First, although his attention to duty has not been exemplary, he has (with the secret backing of the Naval Minister) undertaken the dangerous task of agitating for restoration of naval efficiency and strength. For this undertaking he needed more than the silent approval of his chief and some of his friends at Court:

> Mais dans le tems qu'il se flattoit le plus de leur protection il vit toutes ses espérances s'évanouir, & ses prétendus amis lui manquer au besoin. Il s'en plaignit hautement, & ses plaintes répandues sans aucun ménagement, eurent pour lui des suites fâcheuses. On retrancha ses pensions: on le réduisit aux plus cruelles extrémités (IV, p. 53).

Surely, when he wrote these lines, he must have been inspired partly by the professional and financial losses after 1743?

Secondly, in the course of violent controversies with the Jesuit hydrographer, he found that he merely heightened an unwelcome notoriety:

> D'un autre côté, ceux qu'il avoit méprisez à cause de leur ignorance & de la vie dissolue qu'ils menoient, sur-tout les Prêtres & les Moines, l'accuserent de n'avoir point de religion, reproche odieux, qu'ils sçavent si bien faire valoir, quand ils veulent perdre quelqu'un (IV, pp. 53-54).

Surely the author of these lines was thinking of the dispute with Valois and its unfortunate effects?

From these remarks (ostensibly about Cornelius Agrippa) let us proceed some little way. Was he the victim of party politics in 1743 and the years immediately following, abandoned by a minister whose own position became less secure towards 1749 and who feared the hostility of the majority at Court? The answer is almost certainly in the affirmative. Did he, as Raynal tells us, suffer "des persécution secrètes [sic]" (Corr. Litt., ed. 1877, I, p. 177) because of his quarrels with Mairan and Valois? Once again we must almost certainly say yes. This leads to a more fundamental problem: could he have avoided these troubles? Leaving aside the question of Fate, we can say that an answer is to be found in the character of the man himself. After 1736, conceit and resentment of Parisian monopoly (especially in the Mairan affair) led him into difficulties; his interest in "philosophy" impaired his efficiency in routine duties and incurred the hatred of a Jesuit priest. Naturally, in more sober and guarded moments, he found it prudent to apologize, retract or feign submission; yet could this man who "avoit été dans sa jeunesse & dans la force de son âge très-satyrique, très mordant, très-habile à saisir les ridicules", have spurned the invitation to fight for the efficiency of the Fleet or ignored the gauntlet cast down by a fanatical proselytist? Decidedly not. It is Fréron who explains that "cette causticité lui avoit fait beaucoup d'ennemis, & avoit nui à son avancement dans la Marine" (Ann. Litt., 1757, V, pp. 162-163). But there was nothing that Deslandes could do about it, since it was in the nature of the man, determining how he would react in any given circumstances. It is therefore in a lonely but contentious personality that we must seek one of the principal causes of the misfortunes that befell him as his interests evolved towards "political" action and towards more positive criticism of Church and State.

CHAPTER VI RETIREMENT IN PARIS

Heureux, si je persiste à soutenir avec modération mes premiers sentimens, & si l'air contagieux qui règne aujourd'hui, ne m'invite point à dire par complaisance, & peut-être par intérêt, ce que je ne crois point (H.c., IV (1756), Avert.).

...préférant une vie douce & tranquille à des embarras illustres (ibid., p. 120).

Hoc autem liberiores et solutiores sumus quod integra nobis judicandi potestas, neque ut omnia quae praescripta, et quasi imperata sint, defendamus, necessitate ulla cogimur (Cic., Acad. Quaest, IV, cit. as entête to Traité des diff. degrés de la certitude morale (1750)).

a) The last years

Deslandes had now retired from public life into the tranquillity of his apartments in Paris, where he could still savour the delights of free-thought, despite the "contagious air" outside (vid. supra). Unfortunately he was unable to achieve the ideal retirement described in 1737:

Je ne saurois trop louer ceux qui, ayant servi le Public de tous leurs talens...se retirent à propos, & soûtiennent dans une vie privée la gloire & la réputation qu'ils ont acquise dans des emplois laborieux. Par ce moyen ils survivent à eux-mêmes & s'approchent sans effroi de la mort (H.c.,III, 71).

For, as we have seen, "glory and reputation" were hardly to be his reward for "laborious service". On the other hand, he must surely have found some substantial consolation in the enjoyment of that philosophic leisure after which he had yearned since the days of Malebranche, and in the opportunities afforded to him now for indulging in his favourite occupation. Another decade of composition begins with his retirement:

1748 Recueil de différens traités
1748 Lettre à M. le Trésorier
1749 Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat
1750 Recueil de différens traités
1750 Traité des différens degrés de la certitude morale
1751 La Fortune, histoire critique
1753 Recueil de différens traités
1756 Histoire de M. Constance
1756 Histoire critique de la philosophie (4th vol.)

- a period in which he continues, sometimes more vehemently than before, his assaults upon superstition, ignorance, social and political abuses and all the other impediments to human progress.

The character of Deslandes in retirement is delineated for us by two writers, the Abbé Raynal and Fréron. Raynal, writing to the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha about the MSS of the Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat, sent to him by "une dame, fort connue dans ce pays-ci par le bel esprit", quotes from his letter to the lady:

> Vous me faites un mystère du nom de l'auteur; si je ne me trompe, je l'ai deviné. C'est un homme d'un âge assez avancé, qui a exercé des emplois qu'on peut dire considérables, du moins importants. Il y a acquis l'estime public, mais en y essuyant des persécution secrètes [sic]. C'est un tribut que la probité paye régulièrement à la corruption. Personne n'a dit avec plus de courage les vérités utiles au bien de l'Etat, à l'honneur de la philosophie, au progrès des sciences, ni tu avec plus de ménagement celles qui intéressent l'honneur des particuliers, la tranquillité des familles.
>
> Quoiqu'il aime à parler, il est si modeste qu'il laisse jouir ceux qui sont avec lui du plaisir de croire qu'ils l'instruisent de beaucoup de choses qu'il sait infiniment mieux qu'eux. Jamais homme n'a su mieux que lui avoir tort lors même qu'il a raison. Il use de si bonne grâce qu'il ne vient pas dans l'esprit d'y soupçonner de la complaisance. La vivacité de son esprit ne nuit pas à la justesse de ses idées, l'étendue de sa mémoire à la profondeur de son raisonnement, la diversité de ses connaissances à la sûreté de son goût.....Je croyais qu'il était impossible d'aimer béaucoup de personnes, et de les aimer fortement; il m'en a fait voir la possibilité....On trouve réunis en lui les trois genres d'esprit: l'esprit d'affaires, l'esprit de lettres, l'esprit de conversation. C'est un homme charmant, avec qui je voudrais être tout le temps que je ne puis passer auprès de vous(Corr. Litt., ed. 1877, I, pp. 177-178).

Secondly, we find this tribute in the Année Littéraire:

> M. Deslandes s'étoit retiré à Paris quinze ans avant sa mort. 69 Il y jouissoit des agrémens d'une vie libre & philosophique. Il y cultivoit les Lettres sans ostentation; il aimoit ceux qui s'y appliquoient; il préferoit leur commerce à celui des Grands & Riches. Je l'ai vû souvent, & je puis dire que j'ai peu connu d'hommes d'un caractère plus doux, plus liant, plus égal; c'étoit la politesse, la candeur, la simplicité même. Je n'ai jamais entendu proposer ni soutenir une opinion avec moins de faste & plus de désintéressement que lui. Il étoit toujours maître de son âme,& la vivacité des autres ne troubloit point sa tranquillité; en un mot, c'étoit un des sçavans les plus modestes & les plus aimables qu'il soit possible de rencontrer. Ses lumières, ses connoissances & sa mémoire rendoient sa conversation instructive & agréable. Il avoit cette gaîté douce, le partage d'un esprit solide & d'un coeur exempt de passions. Il n'étoit pas si modéré, lorsqu'on l'attaquoit la plume à la main; il se regardoit alors comme en champ clos, & ne ménageoit point son adversaire. Il étoit cependant toujours disposé à faire la paix; le combat fini, il restoit fidelle au Traité, & se montroit assez indifférent pour l'honneur de la victoire. Tel m'a paru M. Deslandes dans ses dernières années (1757, V, pp. 161-162).

Now, in trying to trace the evolution of Deslandes's character we must surely find these somewhat extravagant eulogies of importance. We note, for instance, that it is acknowledged

that our author fought courageously, but fairly and cleanly, for the good of the realm and of humanity in general, often at the expense of his own comfort; that, having been neglected and unrewarded by men like Bignon and Maurepas, he turned towards the "illustres malheureux", whose cause he espouses in 1751 (La Fortune, pp. 108 and 110); that, back in Paris after a prolonged provincial "exile", he found sweetness in the friendship of the intelligent and polite, whose society he now values all the more because it has been denied to him so long; that the cult of good taste and simplicity (which appeared to be more the religion of Louis-le-Grand and its tutors than Christianity itself!) remains to grace his nature in old age; and that the pagan "Stoicism" of 1712 (see Réflx., ed. 1732, p. 2) serves to provide the calm self-control required in adversity and thus to render misfortunes and privations endurable. We perceive, moreover, a very definite sign of evolution in the modesty of Deslandes in his last years - a modesty which, contrasting with the arrogance of 1736-37, is probably all the more sincere, since it graces a character chastened by disappointment and failure.

There is something else worthy of consideration at this point. In reading these equally warm tributes, we have surely noticed that the first is from the pen of an Encyclopedist and the second from that of the arch-critic of the Philosophic party. The mystery is explained partly by the dates. Raynal's letter was written shortly before or in early 1749, since it refers to the MSS of the Princesse de Montferrat and is actually reproduced in the published novel; Fréron's remarks form part of the obituary-notice to Deslandes in 1757. Now it was in the interim that Deslandes became hostile towards the Party, with whom he surely had so much in common. Other facts and dates fill in the details: in 1751 Diderot plagiarizes the Histoire critique of 1737 without specific acknowledgement; in 1751, La Fortune is dedicated to

Madame de Robecq, enemy of the Pompadour clique and future protector of Palissot; in 1756, the Avertissement of the fourth volume of the Histoire critique contains a passage in which Deslandes contradicts "Messieurs de l'Encyclopédie". The solution to the mystery lies, therefore, in our author's relations with "political" and literary factions of these years.

In addition to the traits of character picked out by Raynal and Fréron, there is another worthy of mention at this juncture. It will be recalled that, at the end of his college-course, Deslandes was persuaded to accept his father's commission in the French Navy and that he agreed because of "des considérations de famille" (H.c., IV, p. 192, n.). Now although we find him regretting this some thirty years later, there is no doubt that he was proud of the colonial achievement of his father and grand-father, to whose wishes he appears to have been obedient. In 1756 he returns to filial duty, hastening perhaps to acquit himself of an obligation at this late hour. The family papers (634/24/6 and 634/12 and 55/passim) contain a number of letters and mémoires bearing upon relations between France and Siam at the end of the XVIIth century; and it is partly from these that Deslandes drew material for his Histoire de M. Constance. Particularly he was concerned to vindicate his father's reputation[70] in the stormy relationship with this tyrannical ruler of the Siamese, and to state a case misrepresented by Jesuits like Fathers d'Orléans, Tachard, and the Abbé de Choisy (Hist. de M. Const., pp. 10-11 and 92). Already, in the Recueil de différens traités of 1753 (see pp. xxiv-xxv and 33-45), he had given a brief sketch of the argument in favour of André Boureau-Deslandes. Now in 1756, he published a separate and much fuller account of the affair, an account that was criticized in March of that year by the Journal des savants (Paris, pp. 156-159), on the grounds that the author had omitted important facts and slandered famous colonial officers. Such opposition, to which he was

by this time inured, did not dismay him, for he was engaged upon the more important task of publishing what was to be the last volume of the Histoire critique. He even cared less than usual about the censor, for he proudly displayed his own name on the title-page of this four-volume edition.[71]

With the fourth volume were bound two biographically interesting pieces: his Hymne à la Paresse, which pays tribute to one of his favourite fetishes; and the very important Mon Cabinet, from which we found information about his personal contact with Malebranche, about his study in Rochefort and his dislike of the place, and, incidentally, about the painting of his portrait about the year 1714 by a celebrated painter of the period.[72] Finally, in this sort of "voyage autour de ma chambre", we come to these scandalous thoughts about death:

Doux sommeil, dernier terme,
Que le sage attend sans effroi,
Je verrai d'un oeil ferme
Tout passer, tout s'enfuir de moi. (H.c.IV, p. 199)

One would naturally suspect that the author of this quatrain had the intention of facing death in a libertine fashion, yet, writing in the Biographie universelle (art.: Boureau-Deslandes), Villenave claims to have possessed a MSS account of Deslandes's last moments (unfortunately not located since then), drawn up by the "philosophe's" nephew-in-law, Aymard-Félicien Boffin de la Sône (not his son-in-law, as stated by Villenave), and from which it is clear that he abjured his errors on his death-bed. This abjuration - which, like so many others of the time, may have been a pure formality - is certainly confirmed by Fréron and the Journal des savants, who give almost identical accounts of the act of abjuration (Ann. Litt., 1757, V, pp. 163-164; J. des S., Amst., May 1757, pp. 492-493). But Fréron gives more than the formal document, and, since he claims to have met Deslandes often, it is to this writer and critic that we turn for an account of our author's last illness and death.

First, Fréron tells of the last illness. Deslandes, he says:

...étoit grand & gros à proportion; mais il étoit sujet à de vives atteintes de goutte. Un an avant sa mort ses jambes s'enflèrent au point qu'elles lui refusèrent le service. Obligé de garder la chambre, il dit à ses amis qu'il n'en sortiroit que pour entrer dans le tombeau (op. cit. p. 163).

This state of depression, he declares, was aggravated by enforced withdrawal from the society he cherished so much:

Il aimoit la société, & le malheur d'en être privé versa dans son ame une mélancolie qui abrégea sa carrière (ibid).

Secondly, he gives information of the act of abjuration and of Deslandes's death:

Il est mort, à ce qu'il a paru, très sérieusement, lui qui avoit fait des reflexions sur ceux qui étoient morts en plaisantant(ibid).

Having made his confession on April 9th, Deslandes apparently sent for two notaries to draw up a document,[73] of which Fréron gives this text:

...il demande sincèrement pardon à Dieu & à l'Eglise du scandale qu'il a causé à la Religion par la composition & distribution qu'il a faites de quelques ouvrages intitulés, Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant, Pygmalion &c : lesquels ouvrages il condamne, ainsi que tous ceux qu'il a faits dans les mêmes principes, voulant que les manuscrits qui s'en trouveront à son décès soient remis entre les mains de M. le Curé de Saint-Eustache ou de M. de Momet, Prêtre habitué en l'Eglise Paroissiale de Saint-Eustache à Paris, son Confesseur, pour être supprimés, & il prie de rendre ou faire rendre la présente disposition publique, son intention étant que tous ceux qui ont des exemplaires les brûlent ou les suppriment(op. cit. pp. 163-164).[74]

Voltaire, who was himself to make a false abjuration in 1767 and who hardly noticed Deslandes during his life-time, could not resist the hypocritical urge to make fun of this document and the writings to which it refers. In a letter of 6th December 1757, he remarked sarcastically that "Deslandes ...avait recommandé en mourant qu'on brûlât son livre des grands hommes morts en plaisantant....Et qui diable savait qu'il eût fait ce livre? (ed. Mol., XXXIX, p. 319).

The act of abjuration was never signed. This formality was waived because, racked with excruciating pain, Deslandes was no longer able to write. The end was fast approaching. At three o'clock in the morning of Monday, April 11th 1757,[75] Deslandes expired, and his body was later buried in the church-yard of Saint-Eustache,[76] opposite what to-day is the "ventre de Paris":

b) Some general biographical conclusions

Biography is concerned with circumstance and character; and there are determinists who will tell us that we have control over neither. This may well be the case, but, in the last resort it is a question of faith and cannot be proved conclusively one way or the other. It is certainly easier to see that the two are inter-related. Events may be guided by the characters of those in high places or of men combined in the mass; on the other hand, events may mould character, imprinting upon it certain features and bringing out certain characteristics which otherwise would lie dormant. So, in summing up our findings about the life and personality of Deslandes we must properly allow both possibilities, supposing sometimes that circumstances are a kind of element in which the character, by virtue of innate strength and weakness, of training and conditioning, manages to swim or sink, soar aloft or fall to the ground; supposing sometimes, however, that Fortune wields too compelling a power for personalities to resist her decress. This raises the most crucial question of all - the freedom to choose, and, on this matter, it is appropriate to compare the careers of Deslandes and Voltaire.

Superficially they have much in common. The social status of the respective families was not dissimilar; both lost the female parent at an early age; the education they received at Louis-le-Grand was virtually identical; in adolescence both composed libertine verses and most probably frequented the same circles in Paris; both visited England and were subjected there to stimuli and influences only different in degree; subsequently both were attracted to Newtonian method and to British deism; their notions of the philosophy of history are found to be fundamentally the same; both tend to advantage ethics and to decry abstruse metaphysics and, in the realm of religion and philosophy, are concerned at about the same stage in their development with the immateriality and immortality of the soul

and with difficulties surrounding the origin of evil and Divine Justice.

Yet Voltaire and Deslandes are very different in genius and achievement. In what, then, does the genius of Voltaire consist? His style is clearer and more entertaining than that of Deslandes, and by nature he is endowed with a more malicious wit and an instinctive feeling for the apt approach in literature. But circumstances matter too. Deslandes, born in a remote colonial outpost and condemned by circumstance to mingle chiefly with administrators and traders, could hardly escape some barbarities of style. What is more: after his twenty-fifth year, he was obliged to spend most of his time in the boorish provinces, once more in daily contact with persons engaged in administration and trade, and denied the best libraries and the most cultured conversation. In these matters all advantages were on the side of Voltaire, who, raised in Paris, soon had the Abbé de Chateauneuf to guide and form his tastes and introduce him to the most refined and unorthodox spirits of his day. Such was the soil in which bloomed Voltaire's genius and which nurtured his superb wit.

Voltaire is also outstanding in what he achieved, and, in this connection, we must speak not only of quality but also of quantity. Because he was given a more powerful native genius and a more roguish and adventurous spirit; because moreover he was brought up entirely in the metropolis and in the company of people who had the measure of contemporary tastes, Voltaire was better equipped to meet a decision facing both men when college-days were at an end - the choice of a career. Now it is simply a matter of fact that both disliked the prospect of a routine job, but the all-important question is how they expressed this dislike. Having obediently submitted to family counsel, for the rest of his days Deslandes continued to regret his decision: Voltaire, having accepted regular employment for the shortest possible time, soon found ways of showing that he in no wise intended to fit himself for

the legal profession. Thus the one, by obedience to family wishes, deprived himself of the leisure necessary for a considerable literary output and rebelled against circumstances only when it was too late to alter them without ruining himself: the other, refractory and independent, provided himself with unlimited time for composition, and, about the time when Deslandes was busy combining naval duties with an attempt to impress Bignon, was preparing to launch himself finally as a publicist. The one lived to regret that he did not accept the cloistered retreat offered by Malebranche: the other advanced boldly upon the world of men and of letters and found an intelligent Emilie to share his increasing successes. Here, then, is the paradox: Deslandes, driven against his own wishes into an administrative post, spoils his chances of success by paying too much attention to literature and "philosophy"; Voltaire, refusing to be bound in the shackles of routine employment, establishes himself as a success, not merely as a writer but also as a businessman.

Success truly breeds success in Voltaire's career. After his Henriade, Voltaire proceeded to dazzling heights of wealth and renown. Why was this? Both Voltaire and Deslandes began with a modest fortune; but (as in the biblical story of the talents) the rest of the story depends on what use they made of their money. Deslandes's funds were gradually dissipated - especially, we suspect, in the Law débâcle: Voltaire put his money to usury and thus acquired the kind of power that was so important in the society in which he moved. At the end of a tiresome career Deslandes, having sold much of his furniture and effects and even some of his books, was forced to solicit prompt payment of meagre pay, which was probably soon cut off altogether. In later years, Voltaire, installed in relative security and in considerable luxury in his frontier palace, launched his attacks against his enemies: Deslandes, having learned in the 1740s the dangerous consequences of outspokenness

was still bound to envelop his thought and to be somewhat cautious in expressing his sentiments. Both men achieved some measure of notoriety; but, whereas notoriety enhanced the reputation and augmented the revenues of Voltaire, it brought misery to the other alumnus of Louis-le-Grand. In other words: to be the "standard of deism" was Voltaire's glory; Deslandes's deism was very nearly his undoing. When the literary giant insulted, he increased his personal power: when the Commissaire de la Marine did the same, he invited disgrace. Even in exile, Voltaire, constantly attaching himself to the great and sought by them, was "news" in the French capital: Deslandes spent a life-time in trying to make his mark upon Parisian centres of culture. And, at the end of it all, he still was obedient to his family's wishes, and reverted once more to the rôle of the dutiful son.

What, then, can we say in conclusion about these two authors? We concede that Voltaire's genius was partly innate, but we insist that he was also favoured by Fortune, and that the voluminous character of his work can be attributed largely to the absence of other demands on his time. Making perforce a virtue of brevity, Deslandes could do no more than sketchily cover the field: prodigious worker though he undoubtedly was, Voltaire had the time to make a more complete survey. Above all, we feel that it is consideration for family wishes that set the seal upon the obscurity of Deslandes. In 1751 Deslandes is plagiarized and passed by, whereas Voltaire is in the van of the advancing forces. This does not by any means lead us to conclude that Deslandes is unworthy of our attention, for he was not insignificant simply because he had a minor part to play in the struggle. For it is necessary occasionally to leave the captains of the Enlightenment, and glance at the second or third ranks, the provincial free-thinkers, the "philosophers" in routine occupations, and to appreciate what they contributed to the grand offensive.

PART I NOTES

1. Unless otherwise stated, all information in this chapter is from Mme. Robert Gaebelé's Une Parisienne aux Indes au XVIIe s., 1937, esp. pp. 38, 41-47, 55-59, 106-107, 145-149, 163-164, 179-188 and Ch. XXVII-XXVIII.

2. The name Boureau is the true patronymic, the designation Deslandes or des Landes being added later. In the Arch. de Chandernagore (Min. de la Fr. d'Outre-Mer, Paris), we find, on the baptismal certificate of François-Louis (b. August 17 1690), that the latter "fut ondoyé et tenu sur les fonds de baptesmes le dit jour 29 septembre mesme année...par Monsieur Cosme GOMMES aussi marchand de ladite compagnie au nom de damoiselle Magdelaine BOUREAU soeur du /sic/mon dit sieur des LANDES BOUREAU père du dit enfant". Similarly in the case of Marguérite (bapt. April 20 1692), the god-father is described as "Monsieur Joseph BOUREAU frère de mon dit sieur André BOUREAU". The name Boureau occurs three times in the 1st vol. of the Mémoires of Fr. Martin, where it applies to our author's uncle. In vol. 2 he is mentioned six times. Our author's father appears for the first time in an entry in these Mémoires dated Dec. 1676: "le Sieur Deslandes Boureau frère du conseiller de ce nom qui était à Surate". In May 1680 begins the series of events related by his son in the Hist. de M. Constance. In Mar. 1684 we read that "le sieur Deslandes Boureau" arrived as Soualis. It is at this point that the name is changed in the Mémoires, and thereafter only the style Deslandes is used by Martin. For instance, we note the pleasure with which Martin records: "J'eus la satisfaction dans ce mois d'une alliance honorable par le mariage de ma fille Marie qui avait passé à Surate avec ma femme, avec M. Deslandes" (II, 424, Feb. 1686). v. régistres de l'Etat-Civil de la paroisse Saint-Louis de Chandernagore,& Martin, Mémoires (1665-94), ed. Martineau, 1932, I, 182, 224, 641; II, 4, 12, 79, 193-194, 221, 235, 278, 317, 318, 343-345, 380, 411, 424, 426, 431, 436.

3. Martin, Mém., II, 380: "Le sieur m'avait parlé il y a quelque temps pour son retour en France; c'est un très bon sujet et même de distinction. Je considérai que je rendrais un bon service à la Compagnie en tâchant de le retenir...Je lui représentai l'état des choses; il resta à ma prière."

4. In his art. in the Revue hist. de l'Inde fr. (1919, p. 185). Singaravélou says that the Deslandes parents arrived in Sept. 1688. We can perhaps be more precise. Luillier (Voy. aux Grandes Indes, ed. 1706, pp. 38 & 46) left Pondichéry on July 22 and arrived in Chandernagore on August 7 - just over a fortnight' journey. Therefore, assuming normal conditions, the Deslandes would reach Chandernagore, or rather its site, about the middle of the month.

5. Some research was needed to determine our author's date and place of birth, since even in 1949 erroneous details were given by Verdun Saulnier (Rev. univ. Nov.-Dec., pp. 271-277). In 1716, La Monnoye (Hist. de M. Bayle, p. 442, n.) merely says: "Mr. DESLANDES...est né dans les Indes...". In 1757, Fréron (Ann. litt., V, 159) initiates a series of misinformed biographical articles by stating that "feu M. Deslandes (André-François) né à Pondichéry en 1690...fut conduit à Paris à l'âge de treize ans" /in fact late in 1701 or very early in 1702, since he left India in Feb. 1701/. Mme. Gaebelé rightly thinks otherwise. If we consider a paragraph of p. 164 of her book with the Errata and p. 225 n., we conclude that André-François was born in 1689 in Chandernagore. We dispute only the second half of this. For the family papers (Arch. de la Seine, DQ ^{10} Domaines) support her indication of year of birth. Document 739/22/50 (May 1708) informs us that at that time André-François was aged 19 and his brother François-Louis, 17½. The latter's birth certificate shows that he saw the light of day in Aug. 1690 at Chandernagore

and was therefore in fact aged 17 yrs. 8 m. in May 1708. If André-Fr. was 19 in the same month, he must have been born in 1689, and the facts of normal gestation support this. Another document (739/22/42-43) narrows the possibilities further. In April 1703, François-Louis was 12½, and this accords with the birth certificate. In the same document, André-François is "âgé de 13-14 ans". Now, if born before April 1689, he would have been simply 14 in April 1703. Thus he was born after that month of 1689. We return to the normal period of gestation: François-Louis was probably conceived c. Nov. 1689, and the latest month for our author's birth would consequently be Oct. 1689. Thus, the latter was born between Apr.-Oct. 1689. That is presumably the nearest we shall get to the truth since his birth certificate is not available. Let us see why it is not to be found. Having failed to unearth it in the Arch. de Pondichéry or those of Chandernagore, we were forced to conclude that it had been in the registers of Bandel, the Portuguese settlement where the parents resided whilst the loge was being built - a conclusion supported by our deductions re. date of birth (v. Martin, Mém., III, 89 & 93-94). The fate of the archives of Bandel is described in the Jesuit Father H. Hosten's art. "Les Registres de l'Eglise de Chandernagore, 1690-1818" (Rev. hist. de l'Inde fr., 1919, pp. 97-166). We learn that these archives "remontent à 1690" - the first year of Chandernagore's existence (ibid, p. 98). But André-François was born before this event, the establishment of the new settlement; and, reading on, we find this piece of information which represents the end of our research in this matter: "...les registres de Bandel commencent seulement en 1757, les précédents ayant été détruits par les Mahométans à l'époque du 'Black Hole' de Calcutta" (ibid, p. 98). Our author's birth certificate was consequently destroyed in the year of his own death.

6. Martin, Mém., III, 93-94 (May 1690): "M. Deslandes donnait avis qu'il avait quitté le bandel ou la peuplade des Portugais, qu'il avait pris la maison que les interpoles anglais avaient fait bâtir à deux lieues plus bas, tant pour la commodité que pour être proche de la loge qu'il faisait élever pour la Compagnie, afin de veiller sur le travail des ouvriers. Le terrain avait été concédé à la nation en 1674, pendant que le sieur Duplessis...était en Bengale".

7. Luillier, Voyage &c, pp. 51-53: "La Loge appellée Chandernagor, est une trés-belle Maison située sur le bord d'un bras du fleuve du Gange...Le Pays s'appelle Ougly, qui est un Gouvernement du Royaume de Bengale. A une lieue de la Loge il y a une grande Ville appellée Chinchurat, où les Hollandois & les Anglois de la nouvelle Compagnie ont chacun un Comptoir...Les Portugais y ont deux Eglises, une occupée par les pères Jésuites, & l'autre par des Religieux Augustins: ces derniers ne vivent pas dans toute la régularité possible...Les Révérends péres Jésuites ont une belle Maison aux environs de nôtre Loge. Il n'y avoit que deux Religieux dont un est Curé de la Paroisse. J'ai souvent eu l'honneur de les entretenir, & ils m'ont paru fort zélez à prêcher l'Evangile, & à faire connoître à ces malheureux Infidéles, le vrai Dieu...Dans la Loge il y a une Chapelle dans laquelle il se dit ordinairement trois Messes chaque jour."

8. Martin, Mém., III, 89 (Apr.-May 1690): "Nous reçûmes aussi des lettres de Bengale le même jour que celles de Surate nous furent rendues. M. Deslandes et une partie des gens de la loge étaient attaqués de fièvre."

9. Luillier, op. cit. pp. 54 & 61-62: "L'air y est fort grossier & le climat n'y est pas si sain qu'à Pondichery...Pendant quatre mois de l'année, il fait à Bengale des pluyes sans discontinuër, tellement que tout est inondé...sur la fin des pluyes, il se produit une si grande quantité d'insectes, & sur tout les Punaises & des Maringoüins qu'on appelle ici des cousins, qu'au soir à la chandelle on ne peut pas quelquefois respirer...Au mois de Juin & de Juillet, on est fort sujet aux bourbouilles & à des demangeaisons par tout le corps...comme l'air est si grossier, il

il faut que la malignité qu'on respire sorte par quelqu'endroit."

10. ibid, pp. 56-60: "Il y a à Bengale toutes sortes de volailles à trés-bon marché; on y trouve une sorte de poules dont les ossemens sont noirs, elle est même d'un meilleur goût que les autres, on y trouve aussi une grande quantité de gibier, comme oyes sauvages, canards, sarcelles, pluviers, tourterelles, pigeons ramiers, pigeons de fuye, pigeons verts qui sont trés-bons, des cailles, des perdrix, mais elles ne sont pas bonnes à manger...On trouve à Bengale des Cerfs qui sont martelez comme les Tigres, une grande quantité de Vaches, des Bufles, des Cabrits, des Cochons qui sont ventrus...On y trouve encore quelques Moutons qui sont trés-bons à manger...On trouve aussi plusieurs sortes de bêtes féroces, comme Tigres...Dans le Gange on y trouve une espéce de gros serpent apellé Caiman, autrement dit Crocodile...On voit aussi des Couleuvres...elles sont trés-venimeuses...".

11. ibid, pp. 54-55: "Le terre cependant y est meilleure, elle produit toutes sortes le [sic] légumes potagéres, du froment, du ris en abondance, du miel de la cire, de toutes sortes de fruits qui æ cueillent dans les Indes...Comme ce Païs est plat, moins sablonneux qu'à Pondichery, & qu'il est rempli d'eaux, la vigne n'y peut venir."

12. There is no apparent connection between André-François (and his brothers and sisters) and the noble and ancient Deslandes family whose lineage is traced in B. Nat. MSS n. a. fr. 9688, ff. 53-57. Marie-Marguérite's birth certificate (Arch. de Pondichéry) shows that she was born on Nov. 20 1686. She is sometimes referred to as "Manon" to distinguish her from other Deslandes children bearing the name Marguérite (739/23/133). In Jul, 1703 she married Barthélemy Mouffle de la Tuillerie, "Conseiller du Roy, et receveur des domaines et bois de la province de Bretagne" (739/22/45). Details of her posterity may be found in the genealogical chart at the head of the present vol., from which it will also be seen that Villenave (Biog. univ., art. Deslandes) is wrong in alluding to the Ms. de la Sône as the "gendre" of André-François. We are reminded too of divergence of opinion between the family papers on the one hand and Barbier's Chronique de la Régence on the other. The latter states that, in May 1749, the daughter of Mouffle de la Tuillerie "qui était trésorier de la Marine, et qui a fait une espèce de banqueroute par ses folles dépenses", was married to M. de Caumartin, Ms. de Saint-Ange, Maître des requêtes, son of M. de Caumartin, Conseiller d'Etat (ed. 1857, IV, 381). But, recording the marriage of Anne-Marie Mouffle de la Tuillerie to Aymard-Félicien Boffin de la Sône in Feb. 1745, the family papers (738/21/1 & 35/1; 739/22/45) repeatedly describe the bride as "fille unique". There is perhaps difficulty on the other side of the match also. The Biog. univ. states the fact that the elder Caumartin ("Conseiller d'Etat" in later years) "ne laissa point d'enfants"; and, as this nobleman died in 1720, it is not very clear to whom Barbier is referring. On the other hand, the family papers record the sale of the office of Trésorier-Général de la Marine in Nov. 1743 by La Tuillerie to De Georville for the sum of 800,000 l. -a detail that does not clash with the imperfect tense in Barbier's account (738/9/3). François-Louis was born on August 17 1690 and baptised on Sept. 29 of the same year (Arch. du Min. de la Fr. d'Outre-Mer: reg. de la paroisse de St. Louis à Chandernagore). For the rest of his biography we are indebted almost exclusively to the Arch. de Metz. He was educated at the Collège Louis-le-Grand and licencié in utroque jure at the University of Paris. Living at that time in the Collège de Justice, rue de la Harpe (where the Lycée St Louis stands to-day), in 1714 he became deacon of the Paris diocese; on Dec. 20 1732, canon of Metz, official of the Cathedral on June 26 1736 and vicaire-général on 27 Dec. of the same year. On June 4 1743 he was appointed grand archdeacon of Metz and installed in this office on 31 July. During his stay in Metz he catalogued the 358 MSS of the Cathedral. He died

in the parish of St. Gorgon, Metz, on July 25 1752 (not in 1755, as reported by Fréron's obituary notice to our author in the Ann. litt. of 1757), and was interred in the Cathedral, where his tomb was re-discovered on Dec. 6 1914, during the installation of central-heating. It contained a chalice, paten and identity cross. When he applied for renewal in his favour of his father's letters of nobility (1742), André-François declared that François-Louis was the only other surviving male child of André Bourreau-Deslandes (B. Nat. MSS, n. a. fr. 9354, fº 504 rº). Of Louis we have little information, having failed to trace his birth certificate; but as document 739/22/43 says he was 9½ in Apr. 1703, he was born in 1693-94. He was probably educated at Louis-le-Grand and in Apr. 1714 was "ecuyer enseigne au régiment des gardes français", and in 1724 "docteur-ès-loix" (634/24/91). He died before 1742. Joseph was baptised on Nov. 10 1695 in the chapel at Chandernagore (Arch. de la Fr. d'Outre-Mer). This contradicts the statement in the Bibl. des ecr. de la Cie. de Jésus of Backer and Sommervogel that he was born in Paris on Sept. 10 1696; although the Jesuit Archives -casually mentioned in this work - come closer to the truth by describing Joseph as "oriundus in Indiis Orientalibus". The same compilation of Backer and Sommervogel declares that, admitted to the order in Sept. 1710, Joseph taught humanities, grammar, rhetoric and mathematics (op. cit. art. Deslandes, Joseph & Supplt.). On the other hand, the family papers state over and over again that Joseph made his "profession" in Nov. 1712; but we cannot prove or disprove the remark in the Bibl. des écr. de la Cie. de Jésus that Joseph spent 25 yrs. in Canada, and died at the Collège Louis-le-Grand in Paris on Jan. 25 1742. Indeed the date of death would accord with the request of 1742 mentioned above. There is very little to say about the two other Marguérites and about Marie-Françoise. The first Marguérite was born on Apr. 16 1692 and died in infancy. So also did Marie-Françoise, bapt. Oct. 7 1694. The second Marguérite, b. Jan. 31 1697 and bapt. Feb. 5, was apparently the innocent cause of her mother's death on Feb. 17 1697, and was to live till May 28 1711. (All three bapt. certs. are in the Arch. du Min. de la Fr. d'Outre-Mer, Paris).

13. v. Domaines DQ10 739/22/133: letters of Dec. 11 & 30 1697 from Fr. Martin to Desprez.

14. ibid. 634/24/10

15. Vapereau (Dict. des litt., ed. 1876, art. Sanadon) says he was "Professeur de Rhétorique à Caen et au collège Louis-le-Grand"; the Bibl des écr. de la Cie. de J. declares that he "professa avec éclat les humanités à Caen et la rhétorique au Collège Louis-le-Grand avec le Père Porée"; Emond,G. (Hist. du Coll. Louis-le-Grand &c., ed. 1845, p. 168) tells of: "le père Sanadon, qui fut successivement professeur de rhétorique et bibliothécaire à Louis-le-Grand..."; and Dupont (Un Poète philosophe - Houdard de la Motte, ed. 1898, p. 103) states that in 1713 Sanadon was still teaching rhetoric at the college. He died in Paris in Oct. 1733.

16. On June 28 1951, the Proviseur of the present lycée expressed inability to help in establishing Deslandes's connection with the college: "Nos archives, maintes fois vidées, ne sont pas riches. Les listes nominatives les plus anciennes que nous possédions sont postérieures à 1815. D'autre part, le livre de Dupont-Ferrier...ne mentionne pas, dans son index alphabétique, le nom de Bourreau-Deslandes". The first half of the statement perhaps explains the second.

17. Discipline at the college appears to have been kindly for the times. When punishment was called for, it was sometimes administered by prefects ("decurions" and "praetors") or by the "correcteur".

18. In accordance with the accepted curriculum, in the first 2 yrs. he would study Cicero's Epistles, some Ovid and the Table of Cebes; in the third, Cicero's treatises on Old Age and

Friendship, Ovid's Elegies and Epistles, excerpts from Catullus, Tibullus and Propertius, Vergil's Eclogues, the 4th bk. of the Georgics and the 5th and 7th of the Aeneid, as well as some passages from St, Chrysostome, Aesop's Fables &c., and, of course, work on Latin and Greek grammar. The 4th year would include courses in the rules of rhetoric, in the moral works of Cicero, in the writings of Caesar, Sallust and Livy, and in the rest of the Aeneid. To this would be added Horace's Odes and some Quintus Curtius; Plato's Letters, Plutarch's Lives, and some works of Isocrates, St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nyssa. The 5th year would be devoted to further studies of the rules of eloquence, with ample illustrations from Demosthenes, Cicero and Quintilian; to Thucydides, Homer, Pindar, Aristotle's Rhetoric and Poetics; and in the sixth year (if the pupil continued) there was much more Aristotle (Compayré, Hist. crit. des doct. de l'éduc. , ed. 1879, I, Livre I, Ch. I).

19. The consequences of these early contacts with missionaries are felt in the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce of 1743, where he speaks of the many canals of modern China, of the "Villes d'eau" composed of junks; and of the ceaseless activity of the people and the liberal government that safe-guarded their felicity (pp. 13-15).

20. Referring to a "jour de congé", Du Cerceau, a master at the school in the second decade of the eighteenth century, says:

> Ainsi chacun de nous l'ame très-satisfaite,
> Selon la faculté de son petit talent,
> Joua non pas à la bassette,
> Non plus qu'au Pharaon, jeu de même recette,
> Vous l'avez défendu comme jeu pestilant,
> Mais bien, l'un au palet, un autre à la poussette,
> Tel au bâlon, tel au volant,
> Colin-maillard, cligne-musette... (Rec. de Poés div., ed. 1720 (1st ed. 1715), p. 261)

21. Emond (op. cit. p. 137) tells us that sons of noble families could be accommodated in a manner in keeping with their social rank - i.e. with a private tutor and valet. v. Desnoiresterres, Voltaire et la soc. au XVIIIe s., ed. 1871-76, I, 16. The mention of the Conti family may be significant when we consider Deslandes's relations with libertines; and the name of D'Estrées is worth remembering, since it was Victor-Marie, Duc d'Estrées who requested him later to provide a method for the jaugeage of ships.

22. Anacreon appears to have been a firm favourite at the college at the time of Deslandes's scholastic career. Sanadon's Epigrammes X & XLIII (Carm. Lib. quat., ed. 1754, pp. 146 & 168) are translated into French from Anacreon, and pp. 84, 86, 151 of the same collection contain poems translated into Latin from the same author. Desnoiresterres also informs us that, in 1706, Voltaire (then in the fifth form) was occupied with translating the Greek hedonist poet(op. cit, I, 28).

23. Not without some opposition, Father Porée encouraged the composition of French verses at Louis-le-Grand: "Cela n'empêchait pas que l'on en fît de latins, et que les vers latins, comme ça allait de droit, ne tinssent le haut du pavé" (Desnoiresterres, op. cit, I, 35). It is none the less a fact that Deslandes's Latin poems were received with less favour by the Mémoires de Trévoux (who considered them unsuitable for young persons, since they were written in the passionate style of Catullus) than by other periodicals. For instance, the Journal des savants said: "Les connoisseurs y trouvent presque partout l'Esprit & la délicatesse de cet Ancien /Catullus/" (both refs. v. M. de Tr., Oct. 1752 (ed. Paris), pp. 2473-2475); and in 1757 (Ann. litt., V, 161), Fréron judged them to be "très-élégantes". Taking a mid-way position, the Bibliothèque française found that Deslandes's verses had in them "toutes les graces & tous les défauts que les Modernes ont sçû donner à ce genre de poesie: ils sont doux, faciles, coulans, légers: ils ont l'air & le son du badinage: mais ils sont communément vides de sens" (XXXV (1742), p. 137).

24. Cotta is the Academic in Cicero's De Natura Deorum. From this his nick-name is probably taken. Du Cerceau (who, we remember, taught at the college) addresses these lines to "Cotta":

Vous faites le mignon, vous faites le poli,
Vous voulez passer pour joli,
Et passer ainsi pour grand homme:
Mais, Cotta, l'on vous avertit
Que qui dit mignon, dit petit;
Comment voulez-vous qu'on vous nomme? (Rec. de poés. div., p. 288).

We note the similarity of Deslandes's verses:

A Cottam egregium atque delicatum!
Non sapit tibi cultior Lycoris,
Illa quae saperet Jovi Lycoris:
Sed sapit tibi foedior Melissa,
Quae vix horridulo sapit popello
O Cottam egregium atque delicatum! (Poet. Rust, ed. 1713, p. 11)

Here we have the same gentle irony and suggestion of effeminacy. Consequently, the person in question was presumably well-known to the college.

25. The sarcastic tone of the Latin poem that follows suggests that Deslandes shared the pique of the Abbé Chaulieu who, impeded in 1703 in his candidature for the Academy by Tourreil, the Abbé Abeille and the Ms. de Saint-Aulaire, wrote a satirical poem "au sujet d'un epitre de l'abbé Abeille, sur la Constance" (Chaulieu, Oeuvres, ed. 1757, II, 63 and n.). This fact we shall remember when we come to consider Deslandes's association with Epicurean circles. The poem to Tourreil may also connect Deslandes with the Cour de Sceaux. v. Mme. de Staal (Delaunay) Mém. , ed. 1822, I, 178: "J'avois adouci la férocité de Toureil; il ne me brusquoit pas". Indeed, the "Corinna" of Deslandes's poem may well be Mlle. Delaunay, then living in the Tuileries, extolled and courted by Chaulieu, on friendly terms with Fontenelle and frequenting the Temple suppers (ibid, I, 169-179). Another poem to "Corinna", and relating to a most luxurious supper, is found in the Poet. Rust., ed. 1713, p.11. Tourreil himself (1656-1715) was deeply interested in the art of oratory, and translated the works of Demosthenes as well as composing Latin verses. In 1691 he became a member of the Acad. des Insc., and in the following year took his seat amongst the "immortals".

26. It seems reasonable to suppose that Malebranche received Deslandes during the latter's college days in much the same way as he received another and contemporary pupil of Louis-le-Grand, Christophe Bernard de Bragelongne (1688-1744): "Malebranche avait conçu pour lui une haute estime; le jeune écolier passait tous les jours de congé dans le cabinet du philosophe; il se délassait de ses travaux dans des entretiens métaphysiques" (Biog. univ. art. Bragelongne). Similarly, the Hist. de l'Acad. des Sc. (Ann. 1744, p. 85) tells us that the future expert on genealogy "...passoit ordinairement les jours de congé, enfermé avec le P. Mallebranche, qui de son côté avoit pris pour lui une tendre estime: c'étoit dans les conférences qu'il avoit avec ce grand-homme, qu'il se délassoit de ses autres travaux. Quelle devoit être l'étendue du génie d'un jeune homme de dix-sept ans à qui les entretiens du P. Mallebranche servoient de divertissemens!" (This situates the contact recorded here around 1705). The careers of the two young lycéens present some parallels: Bragelongne became an "élève" of the Ac. des Sc. in 1711 and Deslandes in 1712; Bragelongne was "reçu dans la brillante société de la duchesse du Maine...Fontenelle, la Motte et Mairan", and we shall suppose our author's acquaintance with some of these and with the Mse. de Lambert with whom Bragelongne was also associated. It is consequently not inconceivable that the Abbé de B..., to whom the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre of 1717 is addressed, was this contemporary of Deslandes, or that the two went along together on "free" days to sit at the feet of the famous philosopher of the Oratoire in the rue Saint Honoré. v. D'Argenson, Mém., ed. 1825, pp. 251 &255).

27. At the end of the 8th Ch. of the Art de ne point s'ennuyer, Deslandes comments with some bitterness on those who, regarding study and meditation as of little help to professional advancement and possessing eyes that are more vigilant than discerning, have demanded an account of his leisure and made a crime of his litteratum otium. Surely this remark of 1715 refers to his guardian and sub-guardian? We note, moreover, that when (in 1737) he speaks of one of the uncles of Pythagoras, he is led to make a cynical "aside": "Un de ces oncles, qui pensoit au-dessus de ce que les parens ont coutume de penser, fut touché de ses reparties pleines de feu; & il l'envoya à Thalès..." (Hist. crit de la ph., II, 43).

28. Marion's Dict. des inst. en Fr. au XVIIe & XVIIIe s. ed. 1923 art. Marine, tells us that Colbert founded an "école de la marine in Rochefort and another in Brest, whilst Rochefort and Dieppe was each endowed with "une école d'hydrographie". We suggest that Deslandes spent the years 1708-11 in Rochefort, for at the end of the Ist ed. (and only the Ist ed.) of the Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant (1712) we find the note "A R... ce 4ème octobre, 1711".

29. A photograph of this letter will be found at the beginning of the present volume. We shall have occasion to refer many times to Fontenelle, especially in connection with the Art de ne point s'ennuyer; Varignon (1654-1722) will come into our discussions relating to the quarrel with Mairan on the subject of jaugeage; Terrasson (1670-1750) will be mentioned in pages of our study devoted to the literary ideals of the salon of Mme. de Lambert; Nicole (1683-1758) was a geometer of renown who demonstrated some of Newton's theorems in France.

30. Of course, as in the case of Voltaire, contacts could easily date from college days. Marchand certainly saw in the Réflexions the work of a Parisian, and considered that the references to the author as a provincial (in the Preface) were an attempt at concealment: "...car il est très-certain que l'Auteur, dont on sait assez le nom & l'emploi, demeure ordinairement à Paris"(cit. La Monnoye, Hist. de M. Bayle &c., ed. 1716, pp. 440-441). It may have been composed by one temporarily residing in Rochefort, but it certainly betrays the author's liking for a Gassendist hedonism of Parisian origin, and establishes our author's circle of acquaintance when he was was in the capital before 1711 and in 1712. We shall see that the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre of 1717 (compsn. dated 1714) confirms this.

31. A clause in the same will and testament is a help in identifying a person of some importance in 1712. " Je donne et legue á Mr. l'abbé de Lachapelle qui est au prés de mes Enfans outre les appointemens qui luy seront deus la somme de cinq cens livres une fois payée en reconnoissance des soins qu'il a pris de leur Education, l'asseurance que je n'aurois pas ma reconnoissance a si peu de chose si la fortune m'avoit été plus favorable". This cleric, who appears to have been a private tutor to the younger Deslandes children, may well be the abbé de la Chapelle mentioned in Lebreton's Biog. normande who came to Paris to teach music at the collège Louis-le-Grand and who, in 1712, became curé of the Parish of Menthéville, near Fécamp, where he passed away in 1741. More than this, he is almost certainly the François de la Chapelle, "vir amantissime", to whom Deslandes addressed two Latin epistles in the Poetae Rusticantis &c of 1713. The encouragement of the family's tutor may be perceived in the following lines: "Ut jusseras, mi Capellane, carmina in unum collegi quae quondam te suaviter instigante scripseram. Vidisti quo amore ad poëticam raperer, quacum voluptate legerem eximios aevi Augustaei poëtas quo contemptu aniles nostrae aetatis fabellas exciperem" (p. 42). It is the judgement of one who has not yet felt the attractions of "Modernism". The second epistle of Aug. 1712 tells of the author's desire to visit

England, a project which his friend will not view with disfavour. Surely, then, this must be the same person (Monsieur de la Cl...) to whom are dedicated the Réflexions sur les grands hommes &c. of 1712, and who shared the author's "Stoicism"?

32. "Les fleurs & les fruits en Angleterre ont les couleurs plus vives, qu'en tout autre Païs. Le gazon sur tout des environs de Londres & de Cantorberri est renommé pour le beau verd" (Extr. d'une lettre écr. de Brest par M. Deslandes au R.P. Deslandes, Jésuite, in Mém. de Tr. ed. Paris, Jul. 1725, p. 1284, n.).

33. "Londres est presque toujours environné d'un nuage inaccessible aux rayons du soleil" (N.V. d'A., p. 237). "En 1713, le duc d'Aumont se plaint aussi d'être attaqué à la gorge par le brouillard, l'air et la fumée" (Ascoli, L'Angl. devant l'opinion fr. &c., ed. 1930, I, 295). Deslandes thus agreed with his chef de mission.

34. Some essential dates related to this mission and to Deslandes participation in it lead to some interesting conclusions.

1712

Aug.
3 Prior returns to London with the spy Gaultier and Messager
19 Suspension of arms signed in Paris between Britain and France, by Bolingbroke and De Torcy
31 In 1713 ed. of Poet. Rust. Desl. declares he is about to visit England (p. 43 : Lutec. Paris. Prid. Cal. Sept. MDCCXII)

Sept.
20 Conference at Prior's house to discuss preliminaries of Utrecht treaties: commercial and colonial matters

Oct.
31 Having paid visit to Paris, Prior returns to London

Nov.
16 Still in Paris, Desl. on point of departing (family papers 634/24/62)

Dec.
17 D'Aumont's mission begins (St. Simon, Mém., ed. 1857, VI, 336; Vast, Les Grands Traités &c:, ed. 1893, III, 55

1713

Jan. Utrecht conference proper begins
Mar. - Apr. Certain treaties signed at Utrecht
May
15 Receipt in Desl. own hand from Paris to B. de la Brosse (739/23/120). Suggests brief return visit?
21 D'Aumont (and most probably Desl.) attends meeting of Royal Soc. Evidence from minutes of May 21 1713:

> "The Duke d'Aumont having intimated by Dr. Sloane his Desire of being chosen a Member of the R.S. and that he Intended to do the Society the Honour of being present at their meeting this Day. Mr. Haukesbee was Ordered to prepare some particular Experiments for his Entertainment. The Duke d'Aumont coming accordingly Accompanyed with Severall ffrench Gentlemen It was thought most proper to Defer the Reading of the Minutes to the next Meeting, and also any other papers. Wherefore he was Desired to walk into the Repository, where Dr. Sloane Entertained his Excellence with Shewing and Explaining to him Severall Naturall and Artificiall Curiosities, with which he Excellence Seemed very well pleased. After which being Conducted into the Meeting Room, He was Entertained with

Severall Experiments of the production of Light by Friction, or Elasticity; of the Mutual Attraction of the parts of matter; of the Curve Caused by the Rising of a Fluid between two Glass planes"

Jun.
2 Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre dated thus in London

Jul.
5/16 Desmaizeaux writes to Desl., presumably to Paris

Aug.
7 Desl. writes to Desmaizeaux from Paris

Sep.
14 Another letter to same corresp. from Paris

Oct. End of D'Aumont's embassy

It is clear from the above dates that Deslandes, engaged upon commercial and maritime technicalities, spent in London a period of time which does not coincide with that of the mission for the whole duration. Our author's "séjour de près de dix mois à Londres" (Nouv. Voy. &c., p. 225) would appear to extend from mid-Nov. at the earliest, to early July, at the latest, whilst the ten months of the official embassy take us from Dec. to the next Oct. Why did Desl. leave London so soon? In the Poet. Rust. (ed. 1752, p. 47), he thanks Silvestre, who practised in London, for rescuing him from the jaws of death: when he returned to France, he went straight to the country (Birch MSS, beginning of letter of Aug. 7 1713). We consider, therefore, that he was granted sick-leave to return to France before the normal time.

35. Deslandes refers to Vergier's Chansons in Pigmalion (ed. 1742, pp. 106-107 n.) lamenting the poet's death; and, without acknowledgement, quotes from an Epître in the Critique des moeurs (in Pigm., ed. 1742, p. 195: Vergier, Oeuvres, ed. 1780, III, 31). In 1690, Vergier became Commissaire-ordonnateur de la marine, and later President of the Chamber of Commerce of Dunkirk. It is more than likely, moreover, that Vergier himself was a member of D'Aumont's embassy (for relations between the two, v. Vergier, Oeuvres, III, 48, 133 & 278). In 1714 he writes to Madame de V*** in London: "Avant que de partir de Londres, j'ai pris trois Billets de la dernière Loterie d'Angleterre..." (ibid, p. 61); and, writing from Dunkirk in the same year, describes to the Baron de Walef (Lieut.-Gen. of the British forces at this time) the sad spectacle of the destruction of the fortifications in that port, recalling, however, a certain dinner-party in London "chez vous avec deux Dames très-aimables" on the eve of return to France (ibid, pp. 126, 132). We may wonder, moreover, if the languid Monsieur D...., mentioned in the same volume (pp. 212 and 161) is Deslandes. For further information about La Méduse (upon which an article is now in preparation) v. Les Agréables Divertissemens de la table, ou les Reglemens de l'illustre Société des Freres & Soeurs de l'Ordre de Meduse, Marseille, n.d. (1730).

36. The Duc de Saint-Simon depicts D'Aumont as extravagant, and is evidently pleased to pass on London gossip regarding the fire at the Duke's temporary residence in the British capital - namely that it was started by D'Aumont himself to extract compensation from Louis XIV and to cover up smuggling activities. The same writer also shows him as prodigiously robust (despite debauch), ignorant and incapable, and yet gifted with taste and wit (Mém., VI, pp. 336, 374-375). On the other hand, the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre (pp. 225-226) speaks of "ses qualitez personnelles; surtout un grand fond d'honneur soutenu d'une

liberalité judicieuse, & de cette politesse vive qui sçait gagner les coeurs..." , and of the esteem with which he was regarded in Britain. In 1737 (H.c., II, 264), Deslandes informs us that his chief of a quarter of a century ago "joignoit à tant de talens superieurs une générosité presque inconnue dans notre siécle".

37. Deslandes does not appear to have been an important member of the delegation. Recent researches into the files of the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères concerned with the 1713-13 embassy have revealed no document in Deslandes's hand-writing, and no specific reference to his participation.

38. No letters of interest to us are to be found in the Correspondence of Sir Isaac Newton &c., ed. Edleston, London, 1850. We look forward therefore to H.W. Turnbull's volume of Newton's correspondence dealing with the period of Deslmdes's visit. At present only Vol. I (1661-75) is announced, and the editor has not yet been able to communicate anything of interest to our thesis. For further tributes to Halley, v. Recueil de différens traités &c., ed. 1750, esp. pp. 185, 192 & 217. In this volume Deslàndes also makes use of translations of the Philosophical Transactions of the R.S..

39. His enthusiasm for scientific method is shown in the experiments he made in Britain. He succeeded in making a red dye from pulverized coal left in water on the window-sill of his lodgings in London, and in obtaining a pigment from coal-ash heated with alcohol and iron-filings. This grey pigment was used to dye wool to a shade hitherto unobtainable in Britain (Hist. Ac. Sc., Ann. 1713, p. 16).

40. The translator speaks highly of this "excellente Production", refers to the author as "naturalizé dans une Nation qui va bientôt être reconciliée avec la vôtre...", and hopes that the Réflexions will help to cement Franco-British amity. He also claims that this book proves that one can indulge in free-thinking in France as well as in England.

41. Dr. Pierre Silvestre (d. 1718) came to England from Holland in 1696 to become a member of Lord Montagu's household, a situation which procured him a private practice in London and the post of physician to William III. The association of Desmaizeaux, Silvestre and Saint-Evremond is confirmed in the Biog. univ., art. Saint-Evremond, where we read: "...quelques mois avant sa mort il consentit à revoir ses manuscrits avec Desmaizeaux et Silvestre". Two years later (1705) these two collaborated on the first complete ed. of the works of Saint-Evremond. Desl. mentions Desmaizeaux in this connection (Réflex., ed. 1732, p. 90 n.).

42. Regnier Desmarais d. Sept. 6 1713. La Monnoye succeeded him in the Academy.

43. A diligent search in the Bibl. gén. des écr. de l'Ordre de St. Benoît has not led us to any historian who exactly fits the case. The nearest we have been able to come to identifying the "Benedictine" (v. Desl. tribute to Mabillon and his Order in H.c., II, 445) is to suggest Dom Martin Bouquet(de la congrégation de St. Maur) who lived from 1685-1754. In Dom Bouillon's compilation mentioned above,we learn that Bouquet edited Flavius Joseph, and "travailla ensuite à donner au public la collection des historiens des Gaules & de la France, dont il a donné 8 vols. en 1738, & années suivantes". " Les savants, tant en France que des pays étrangers, venoient le consulter, & profitoient de ses lumieres" (ed. 1777, I, 143-144). Of course, a much more attractive hypothesis is that Deslandes was seeking material for the ~~much more~~ important catalogue raisonné of Lenglet-Dufresnoy which appeared in 1713. According to this hypothesis we could say that Desmaizeaux's procrastination accounts for the fact that the Paris ed. of Dufresnoy's Méthode had only Latin titles of English historical works (The German Mencke tells us this in the Nouvelle Préface to the Leipsig ed. of 1714). It is

none the less a fact that Dufresnoy, though an abbé, was not a Benedictine. Indeed, as to the Avertissement to the VIth vol. of Diderot's grand Encyclopédie (pp. ii-iii) makes clear, this historians' Constitutions de l'Empire and Diplomatique were attacked by the Benedictine authors of the Nouvelle Diplomatique. We do not, however, rule out the possibility that the word "Bénédictin" was put into the letter to Desmaizeaux because for some reason Dufresnoy wanted to keep his imminent publication a secret from the French journalists in London. Whoever his friend really was, Deslandes informs Desmaizeaux in this letter that the library of Sainte-Geneviève suffices for most of the historian's needs. An interesting side-light is given by the Mém. of the Ms. d'Argenson, who tells us that the Duc d'Orléans (d. 1752) "passera des journées entières à Sainte-Geneviève, à disputer avec les pères érudits sur le vrai sens d'un passage hébreu ou chaldéen, sur la ponctuation d'un verset de la Bible, sur la situation du paradis terrestre" (ed. 1825, p. 337). The affection for the Benedictine Order that we noted in the Histoire critique of 1737 may partly explain why, in the second decade of the century, Deslandes is found to be interested in precisely the kind of details that the Duc d'Orléans was to discuss later.

44. "N. Prévost, établi à Londres, à Southampton Street, dans le Strand, était, avec du Noyer, le premier marchand de livres français..." (Desnoiresterres, op. cit., I, 393). This biographer of Voltaire does not connect the French bookseller with the family with whose daughter his hero became infatuated. Yet it is a fact that the family came to England at one time and that, at the time of Voltaire's escapades with Olympe, Madame Du Noyer was living in Holland apart from her husband.

45. Moreover a) Boyer's letter to Deslandes, printed at the head of the Engl. tr. of the Réflexions, is dated Mar. 25 1713 - i.e. four or five months before the correspondence with Desmaizeaux; b) there are no Poés. div. in the 1713 tr. ; c) a quotation from Cicero which, in the letter to Desmaizeaux of Aug. 7 1713, Desl. corrects in the proof ("p. 57, l. 5") in fact occurs on p. 55, l. 19 in the Boyer translation of 1713.

46. Deslandes pays to Saint-Réal some tribute in the 2nd. vol. of the H.c., for he speaks of the "commentary on Ancient reputations" that this author had promised to furnish; and, apart from refrring to the friend of Saint-Evremond as "Un Auteur moderne, qui a donné des Ouvrages d'un goût très-fin", he appears to have had some knowledge of his plans - information obviously acquired from Saint-Réal's friends in London: "Je sai qu' Epicure ne devoit point être mêlé dans cette critique; tout au contraire, le dessein étoit formé de travailler de plus en plus à établir sa réputation" (p. 342). We do not find the "commentary" in question amongst the works of Saint-Réal that reached the press. The same author may have had some influence upon our author's notions of the "new" historical method.

47. Kerviler's Répertoire général de Bio-bibliographie bretonne, ed. 1886-1908, XII, 112 refers mainly to Deslandes's scientific monographs. On Aug. 27 1945, the Aide-archiviste des Arch. Mun. de Brest stated that the Etat-Civil contained no document that would confirm Deslandes's residence in that town. Neither have the Arch. de Finistère anything that concerns him (Jun. 30, 1939)

48. Deslandes was nominated in place of Ozonam (letter from Secr. perpét. of Ac. Sc., Jan. 15, 1939). Like the Abbé de Bragelongne (v. n. 26 of this pt. of our study), Deslandes appears to have achieved this distinction at the early age of 23 (mimimum age, 20); and since, in the case of the Abbé, the Hist. Ac. Sc. (Ann. 1744, p. 86) records this as an event of some rarity, we may assume that our author's early nomination was a signal honour.

49. Half a century later, the name of Deslandes was still associated with pioneer work on drinking-water at sea - with some bitterness, however, since his suggestions were not being followed: "La vie que nous menions à bord n'étoit pas amusante, parce qu'elle étoit uniforme: ceux qui pouvoient manger, faisoient bonne chère. On servoit tous les jours des légumes, de la volaille & du lait frais; mais l'eau, de temps en temps, étoit croupie & corrompue: l'odeur seule en étoit infecte. Je ne sais pourquoi nos Armateurs ne veulent pas mettre en usage les moyens assez simples que le Docteur Hales, chez les Anglois, M. Deslandes, parmi nous, & d'autres savans estimables, ont imaginé pour conserver les boissons & les vivres dans les Voyages de long cours. Il n'en coûte pour l'eau, qu'un peu de souffre, & des précautions qui ne sont pas dispendieuses" (Bérenger, Les Soirées provencales, ed. 1786, III, pp. 26-27). As for worms that destroyed the timbers of vessels: in the Voyage de l'Arabie Heureuse (May 1715), La Roque spoke of the threat that the Dutch might block the entrance to the Red Sea after a French ship had entered it, "inconvénient capable de faire périr nos navires par les vers, la même chose étant arrivé /sic/ à des vaisseaux Français à l'embouchure du Gange" (p. 5). This last fact was better known to Deslandes than to most people!

50. Hist. Ac. Sc., 1719, pp. 26-28. Lightning conductors were not known until the time of Franklin. The shape of a steeple being an invitation to electrical charges, it is probable that sound-waves had no share in the disaster.

51. For further views on the character of Bignon v. Marais, Mém., ed. 1863-68, III, 31 (an amusing account of Bignon's distaste about the signing of the famous formulary at the Oratoire in Sept. 1723) and Saint-Simon, Mém., II, 160 (a most unfavourable evaluation of Bignon's character, which, whilst being that of a "bel esprit, très savant", was none the less that of a hypocrite whose preferment was due entirely to nepotism).

52. In Nov. 1951, the Cabinet des MSS of the B.N. supplied the information that, amongst Bignon's letters in their possession, there is none addressed to Desl.

53. Information acquired by Desl. on this occasion proves useful in the Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce (1743, p. 64, n.).

54. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, eldest son of the great minister of Louis XIV, b. Paris 1651, became ~~Naval~~ Minister with control of naval affairs after 1676, and d. 1691.

55. Mém. Ac. Sc., Ann. 1734, p. 229: "Pour prendre une idée suffisante...sur beaucoup d'autres sujets de Physique, on n'a qu'à lire la Traduction Latine que nous a donnée depuis peu M. Musschenbroek des Essais de l'Académie de Florence. Ce savant & laborieux Auteur l'a accompagnée d'additions considérables..." Musschenbroek is also mentioned several times in the 1735 Mém., particularly in relation to Du Fay.

56. The old inventory of the Arch. du port de R. (XCII, p. 571) has the entry: "Deslandes, commissaire général à Brest, vient servir à Rochefort aux appointemens de 4200 l." (1736). Unfortunately termites have destroyed the document to which the entry refers. The Arch. Munic. de R. contain no document concerning Desl. Consequently, the story of his service in R. has been built up from 3 sources:

(1) Arch. du port de R., pièces I E, 128, p. 577; I E, 129, p. 399; I E , 130, pp. 139 & 343; I E, 134, p. 25; I E, 142 pass.

(2) Arch. de la Marine (in Arch. Nat., Paris), pièces- B^2 307 (229, 304); B^2 308 (213, 256, 257, 286, 289, 292, 296, 297, 298, 299, 315, 316, 323, 356); B^2 314 (249, 250, 251, 253, 254, 255, 263, 269, 271, 277, 279, 283, 289, 301, 302, 303, 334, 385, 386, 416); B^2 316 (152, 165, 177, 247, 269, 270); B^2 319 (185, 212); B^2 320 (164, 173, 178, 195, 211); B^3 415 (509).

(3) Dossier Personnel (in Arch. de la M., Arch. Nat.)

C7 85, 3 pièces: lettre de Letanduere à Maurepas, Oct. 1739 (v. n. 60 of Pt. I of present study); item from Trésorier-Général de la Marine, Mar. 31, 1748; copy of Desl. request for payment of emoluments, Dec. 1746.

57. Dans un coin de Province,
Tout environné de marais,
Où le vin est très-mince,
Où les hommes sont très-épais.

Où la fiévre au teint pâle
Tient ses séances tout l'Eté,
Et des feux qu'elle exhâle,
Corrompt la meilleure santé.

Où Zéphir sur la plaine,
Ne vient point caresser les fruits,
Et pour eau de fontaine,
On ne boit que l'eau de puits.

Dans ce lieu, que l'envie
Trouble, & se plaît à décrier,
Je vois couler ma vie,
Sans sçavoir à qui me fier (Mon Cabinet, in H.c., IV, 189-190).

Already he seems to have forseen that it was to be the most unhappy period of his life.

58. v. Monod-Cassidy, L'abbé Jean-Bernard Le Blanc, ed. 1941, p. 250, Lettre XLVII "De Paris ce 9 octobre, 1736": "...on imprime actuellement une Histoire critique de la philosophie, dont Mr. Deslandes de l'Académie des Sciences est l'autheur".

59. Deslandes's own situation at this time recalls his eulogy of Pliny in the Hist. crit. of 1737: "Pline exerça des emplois très-considérables, & il eut avec cela le loisir de publier un grand nombre d'ouvrages. Personne n'a été plus convaincu que lui de la nécessité de l'étude: il regardoit tout le tems qu'on lui déroboit, comme un tems perdu, & dont la perte doit causer des regrets infinis"(III, 61).

60. A Monseigneur le comte de Maurepas, ministre et secretaire d'estat Octobre 1739

Des herbiers de Letanduere, Commissaire General d'artilleri au departement de Rochefort prens la liberté de vous representer très humblement que pendant le tems que Mr. des landes a été armateur à Rochefort il a eu plusieurs sujets de plainte sur la façon de remplir les fonctions de son employ le dit ordonnateur pretendant de lui oter l'authorité d'employer les ouvriers de l'artillerie aux moindres et aux plus petits ouvrages, même pour le service journalier du port, dans les quels il n'est point besoin d'employer de nouvelles matières non obstant que le dit des herbiers de letanduere lui en rendde ensuite un comte exact, par luy-meme ou par ses lieutenants; sans qu'au préalabl il en ait doné son ordre par écrit, et en outre sans qu'il ait par un autre écrit, doné avis aux comissaires ordinaires qui ont le detail des ateliers dans le port de l'ordre qu'il a doné pou l'artillerie affin que les dits comissaires surveillans ayent l'execution des dits ordres, ce qui est une nouveauté qui marque une défiance honteuse et déshonorante pour tout le corps de l' artillerie auquel il n'a jamais été doné de surveillans ni d' inspecteurs. que le dit des Landes a poussé le despotisme de son authorité jusqu'a faire recevoir dans la compagnie des apprantis canoniers un mousse qui na fait qu'une campagne en cette qualite, et n'a eu congé que de mousse en débarquant depuis très peu de tems, qui est un enfant, qui n'a ny l'aage ny la force ny la figure qui convient pour être à présent propre à ce métier et ce uniquement parce que cet enfant avoit été précedemment montré au Sr. des herbiers de letanduere qui l' avoit trouvé trop jeune et trop foible pour remplir l'intention de l'ordonnance de 1689 au sujet des jeunes matelots de 18 ans au moins qui doivent estre instruits en cette compagnie et

desquels les officers commandans de l'artillerie ont toujours été les juges pour decider si les sujets qui se presentent y sont propres, ainsy que du merite de ceux qui en sortent. que l'esperance de la prompte arrivée de Mr. de Ricouart dans le port et le desir que le Sr. des herbiers de Letanduere avoit Monseigneur de venir vous faire sa cour, l'ont empeschés de vous porter ces plaintes dans le tems: et vous suplier d' ordoner que ce qui nous a plû de decider par nos Lettres du 25 may et 8 juin 1738, sera executé, et qu'en conséquence les fonctions des commissaires ordinaires chargés du détail des ateliers de l'artillerie seroient: d'examiner si les ouvriers y travaillent assiduement, de dresser les rôles qui servent a leurs payemens, et de faire fournir du magasin général les matieres necessaire sur la demande faitte à l'intendant par le commandant de l'artillerie, et que l'execution des ouvrages de la ditte artillerie seroit commise aux soins du dit commandant, en rendant compte a lintendant, et en son absence a l' ordonateur. Le Sr. des herbiers de Letanduere est très persuadé que ces justes sujets de plaintes, cesseront entièrement sous le tres-digne intendant qui est en place aujourduy, mais monseigneur; ils seront renouvellés a la premiere occasion ou le dit Sr. des landes deviendra ordonateur, il changera tout lordre du service etably par Mr. de Rocouart et âprouvé par vous, tout ainsy qu'il a fait celuy qui se pratiquoit anciennement, et come il n'est pas douteux qu'il n'ait tâché, ou qu'il ne tâche, de vous faire aprouver les raisons de touttes les nouveautés quil a introduittes, vous seriez allors surpris de recevoir des plaintes sur des pratiques etablies, dont les inconveniens ne vous auroient pas été representés lors de leurs etablissements; elles tendent pricipalement et uniquement à l'avalissement de l'employ de commissaire general de Lartillerie.

Vous serez convaincu de cette vérité Monseigneur si vous avez agreable de faire attention a ce que Mr. des landes a pratiqué sur le fait dont il s'agit, le voicy, en peu de mots; allant visiter les âteliers du port, notamment la sale darme, Mr. des landes trouva que les ouvriers venoient de comencer a travailler pour mettre des armes nouvellement arrivée de la ville en etat de recevoir la preuve.

Mr. des landes fit apeller le maitre armurier et luy demanda qui luy avoit doné lordre de faire cet ouvrage, le dit armurier répondit, que c'étoit Mr. du pin de Bellegarde lequel aparement luy en rendroit compte si tost qu'il le vêrroit, a quoy Mr. des landes en presence de touts les ouvriers de la salle darme quil fits assembler, ordona au dit maitre armurier de faire quiter cet ouvrage sur le cham, (sans aucune consideration pour un officier de la capacité et de l'aage de celuy qui l'avoit ordoné) et defendit au dit maitre armurier et a touts les ouvriers, sous peine de prison, de faire la moindre chose sans qu il en eut prealablement donc son ordre par ecrit,

Il resulte necessairement d'un pareil etablissement que puisque Mr. des landes porta luy-même de pareils ordres directement aux ouvriers, lorsque le commissaire general d'artillerie leur dira de faire la plus petitte chose qui se soit, ces ouvriers peuvent exiger que le dit commissaire general leur montrent l'ordre par ecrit de Mr. des landes, ainsy les fonctions du dit commissaire general dartillerie ne peuvent plus trouver place entre Mr. des landes et louvrier sans estre entierement avilies.

se sont la monseigneur; les ûsages etablies par Mr. des landes; que le Sr. des herbiers de Letanduere vous suplie tres humblement de reformer, affin que pareilles choses ne puissent plus arriver lorsque Mr. des landes sera ordonateur par l'absance ou maladie de l'intendant...

le seul moyen de remedier a ces abus, et de mettre tout en regle affin de couper la racine a touttes ces tracasseries, sans perdre de vue le point capital qui a doné lieu a la ditte ordonnance, est Monseigneur, quil vous plaise d'interpreter la ditte ordonance du 16 octobre 1729, et qu'il soit dit que sa majesté n a pas entendu que les comissaires generaux dartillerie

fusent subordonés aux comissaire generaux de la marine ni ceux cy aux autres, et que son intention est, que lorsque les dits comissaires generaux et ordinaires de la marine se trouveront ordonateurs dans les ports, ils agissent de concert avec les comissaires generaux d'artillerie, pour tout ce qui concerne les mouvemens de la ditte artillerie.

a fontainebleau, le 15 octobre, 1739
/signed/ des herbiers de Letanduere

There may well be much justification in this protest, which nevertheless shows what ill-educated, spiteful and conservative colleagues our author had to deal with in Rochefort, and partly explains his isolation expressed in Mon Cabinet (e.g. v. our note 57 to this Pt., last stanza cit.).

61. B.N. MSS n. a. fr. 9354 f² 504 r², dated 1742, but not in Desl.'s hand:

Au mois d'avril 1703. Le feu Roy voulut bien accorder à André Boureau Deslandes des Lettres de noblesse, tant en considération des longs services qu'il avoit rendus dans les Indes orientales à l'avantage du commerce des François et de la Religion qu'à cause de la destination que Sa Majesté luy donna alors pour passer à St. Domingue en qualité de Commissaire ordonnateur et de Directeur de la Compagnie de l'assiente.

Le Sr. André Boureau Deslandes fit enregistrer ces lettres de noblesse au Parlement et chez la Chambre des Comptes.

Lors de son deceds qui arrive peu de tems après à Saint Domingue, il avoit plusieurs enfans males. Mais il ne reste aujourd'huy que le Sr. Francois Louis Boureau Deslandes, prêtre chanoine de l'Eglise de Metz où il est aussi official et grand vicaire et le Sr. André Francois Boureau Deslandes commissaire général de la marine.

Comme cet anoblissement se trouve dans le cas de la révocation portée de l'Edit du Moi d'aout 1715 de ceux accordés depuis le premier Janvier 1689 Le s. André Francois Boureau Deslandes supplie très humblement Le Roy de vouloir bien de l'excepter de l'éxecution de cet Edit.

Il représente à cet effet que les motifs pour lesquels les Lettres de noblesse furent accordées à son Père sont de la nature de ceux pour lesquels Sa Majesté a jugé à propos d'excepter plusieurs anoblyssemens de l'Edit de 1715 suivant la faculté que le Roy s'en étoit reservée par le même Edit.

Que cette exception en sa faveur ne peut tirer à aucune conséquence puisque n'étant point marié les avantages de l'anoblissement se reduisent à sa seule personne.

Et que d'ailleurs il ose esperer que Sa Majesté aura quelque égard aux services qu'il rend dans la Marine où il est attaché depuis l'année 1708.

/no signature/

62. v. Poet. Rust. &c., ed. 1713, p. 22 (Ad meam Bibliothecam): "...O mei libelli./ Tantum vos amo, vos amabo tantum."

63. This Essay, which received the royal privilege on May 20 1747, was generally regarded with favour by the press. The Mém. de Tr. (ed. Paris, Jul. 1748, p. 1372) approved of the author's frankness and honesty and the Merc. de Fr. (Feb. 1748, pp. 109-11) praised the "already famous" writer for "l'étendue de ses connoissances, la sagacité & la pénétration qu'il emploie à pénétrer des matières si obscures".

64. On Nov. 20 1950 the mayor of La Rochelle wrote to say that Deslandes came to Rochefort from Brest in 1736 and remained there till 1746; that he was elected to the Acad. de La Rochelle on Sept. 2 1739 - the date we have therefore given in the text. Moréri's dictionary (ed. 1759, art. La Rochelle) reports the founding of this Acad. in Apr. 1732 and the first public session in 1735. It also mentions M. de Chassiron, trésorier de France et conseiller d'honneur au présidial de la Rochelle who took a most active intrest in the meetings. v. n. 68 of this Pt. of our work.

65. Delayant's Biographie rochelaise (MSS 356) refers to Deslandes's polemic with Valois. The clash between the two probably explains the remark in the Recueil de différens traités of 1753 (p. xvii): "toute jalousie doit être exilée de ces Sociétés Littéraires".

66. There are 8 Entretiens. The Ist is concerned with differences between sailors and others in the matter of free-thinking, and these are found to reside mainly in the relative isolation of sea-faring men; the 2nd deals with the existence of God; the 3rd with the need for revealed religion; the 4th endeavours to prove the authenticity of Scripture and the mission of Moses; the 5th treats of the immortality of the soul and future rewards and punishments (J. des sav., ed. Amst., Jun. 1748, p. 263: "que...l'âme est spirituelle & immortelle & qu'elle sera punie ou récompensée après la mort: on a employé dans ce dialogue les raisonnemens les plus forts que la Saine Philosophie puisse fournir, & on les a fortifiés par l'autorité de la Révélation"). The 6th seeks to prove that the Christian religion is of divine origin; the 7th argues that the Catholic is the only true Christian Church. Finally there is a prayer taken from the Psalms.

67. The vilain vomissement refers to the sea- sickness from which the missionary suffers in the Ist Entr. The phrase deux bons trésoriers is incomprehensible, since only one is addressed by Desl. Le digne chef du Pilotin is an allusion to Valois's work of 1735 on the art of piloting a ship.

68. The full name is Pierre-Mathieu-Martin de Chassiron (1704-67). In 1747 he published the Mémoires of the Acad. de La-Rochelle, and in 1749 his own Réflexions sur le comique larmoyant, directed against La Chaussée.

69. This is not true. Had he retired to Paris 15 yrs. before his death he would have done so in 1742, whereas he remained in Rochefort till the end of 1746.

70. This aspect of Deslandes's work has appeared to us to be too wide a subject to be treated within the bounds of the present study. We therefore confine ourselves to writings that do not concern his father.

71. The date of publication was perhaps propitious, since it anticipated by a few months the savage censorship imposed in 1757.

72. A French colleague has searched in vain in the Rochefort-La Rochelle area for this portrait of Deslandes referred to in Mon Cabinet. On Mar. 5 1951, the Conservateur du Cabinet des Estampes of the B.N. gave the information that the collections in his charge have no likeness of Deslandes to offer.

73. Not, as Robertson suggests (A Short History of Freethought, ed. 1914, II, 236)because of the proclamation of the death-penalty for attacks on religion, which was made five days after Deslandes's death and registered on Apr. 21 (Pellissier, Volt. phil., ed. 1908, p. 91).

74. This text is from the Ann. litt. Almost the same text is given in the J. des sav.(ed. Amst., May 1757, pp. 492-493), the only variant being "L'Histoire critique de la philosophie" in place of "Pigmalion". We cannot say which is authentic, since searches in the Arch. de la Seine, the Arch. Nat. &c. have rewarded us with neither original or copy. ~~But we choose Fréron, since he appears to have been intimate with Deslandes in his latter days.~~

75. This of course makes absolute nonsense of an entry in the Table générale of Maury's Ancienne Académie des Sc. (ed. 1864,

p. 375) which gives Deslandes's date of death as 1721!

76. In the summer of 1950 the curé of Saint-Eustache, a man deeply interested in archaeology and genealogy and busy on an attempt to reconstruct the Etat-Civil of his parish for the pre-revolutionary period, was able to reveal nothing about Deslandes that we have not discovered from other sources. He did, however, prefer the information that our author's grave is not located within the church, and was probably swept away with the rest of the cemetery at the time of the Revolution of 1789.

PART II

THE EARLY PHILOSOPHY; THE INFLUENCE OF PARISIAN CIRCLES

CHAPTER I DESLANDES, THE EPICUREAN

Tous ses ouvrages sont d'un homme d'esprit; mais tous ne sont pas d'un chrétien. (Nouveau Dictionnaire hist., ed. 1789, III, 272 A)

Rendons...justice à Epicure; personne n'a mieux eçû que lui, rendre la volupté raisonnable (Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant, p. 95).1

J'en appelle au jugement de Monsieur de Fontenelle...Que l'indifference fait honneur à un Philosophe, quand elle est bien ménagée! (Réflex., p. 15)

Deslandes began his philosophic career with two prose writings, the expressed aim of which was eminently proper to philosophy - namely the promotion of human happiness. This aim was pursued in two ways: in 1712 (and, in re-edition, in 1714) he was concerned with the art of taking away the fear of death;[2] in 1715, with the art of making men easy in society. And, like the great Cicero who figures so often in our author's magnum opus of 1737, in order to demonstrate "les principes les plus sûrs & les regles les plus invariables pour bien vivre, il commence par le mépris de la mort..." (H.c.,III, 36).

a) The Réflexions

The Preface to the first prose work tells us how the writer estimates contemporary taste. The moralists, La Rochefoucauld and La Bruyère are, like seventeenth-century novellists, out of fashion. Turning nowadays to "truth" and to "philosophy", intelligent readers prefer works attacking prejudice, dealing in abstractions and tending to perfect human reason. How shall the beginner meet these demands? With appropriate modesty Deslandes explains his own inadequacy when compared with more able exponents of "philosophy" - an imperfection which compels him to seek in another way the approval of the enlightened, namely by providing an "heureux mélange d'érudition & de critique" (p. vi) and a mixture of the serious and the frivolous.

At the beginning of the text he tells us how (with the Abbé de la Chapelle, to whom the book is almost certainly dedicated)[3] he has been engaged in thinking and conversing about death at a time when light-hearted companions were busy gaming or hunting. His excuse is that discussing death in a particular way is a sort of "mental debauch" which can therefore be set alongside the normal pleasures of his contemporaries, and that Fontenelle has provided a comparable case in the Pluralité des mondes. This acknowledgement is significant, since it is at this point that he proclaims the Fontenellian notion of universal folly on which his own demonstration will rest. Indeed, the fundamental relevance of this view of mankind is stressed in the succeeding remark that this ridiculous spectacle is best appreciated from one's death-bed. And since - paradoxically enough - wisdom begins with acceptance of the fact of universal folly, the author proposes to speak of famous people who have met their deaths in unconventional states of mind, and especially those who have joked in their last hours. Reference is made to the case of Cato of Uttica, censured in Fontenelle's Dialogues des morts for expiring with solemnity.[4] True, the common crowd may well be shocked at the suggestion that Cato died too seriously, but what do they know of délicatesse (p. 15)? Who, then, is capable of appreciating "delicacy"? Poets are amongst the select few who are now discovered to have held views in harmony with those of Fontenelle: Anacreon, inventing new pleasures in his declining years; Catullus, speaking of death as he urged his beloved to enjoy the present time; Caecilius Statius, professing he would be able to die without regret in seven months' time because he would have found so much enjoyment in the intervening six; Sannazaro, declaring that the prospect of death should make present passion the more intense. These names, he hopes, will help to convince "cette partie du Monde, qui ne se gouverne point par préjugez, ni par habitude...(p.21)". of the validity of his "system". What, then, is this "system"?

It is the tasteful pleasure-seeking of the honnête homme, who maintains his hedonism as death approaches.

The author provides illustrations: Petronius, who committed suicide at a time when grossness displaced the refinement he prized and who departed from this life "voluptuously", writing verses and joking with his companions; Angelo Politian, composing a chanson to the accompaniment of his lute and expiring during the second couplet; Pierre Bayle, passing away whilst engaged in a polemic with Leclerc; Tschirnhausen, crying "Triomphe, victoire!" in the joy of his last moments on earth; Atticus, refusing food and becoming gayer as death came towards him. Indeed, suicides (or persons wilfully hastening natural processes) are fairly common in the pages of the Réflexions, the author of which boldly proclaims: "C'est pour éviter des malheurs certains, que la mort est souhaitable dans quelques momens" (p. 43). Yet they are no more arresting than some of the other examples he gives. Facetious moribunds like Augustus and Rabelais; Malherbe and Bourdelot demanding grammatical or stylistic excellence from those around their death-beds; Madame de Mazarin, cheered by Saint-Evremond and remaining libertine and sceptic to the last; Buchanan, "mort en parfait buveur", Laïs, "en femme galante"; Des Yveteaux asking for a saraband to speed him on his last journey; Gassendi, alleged to have been secretly sceptical in his final moments; Hobbes, taking a step into "obscurity"; Passerat, composing a humorous epitaph for himself; Vanini at the stake, proclaiming his superiority over Christ, who feared death - these are some of the illustrations provided to convince the intelligent few that facing death need not be a sad or terrifying business.

Particularly at the author claims that "les idées de vertu & de vice sont assez chimériques: elles supposent autant de vanité que d'ignorance...(p. 126), this choice of examples is enlightening, for it betrays not only a non-Christian judgement, but a distinct predilection for rebels and heretics. As the Jesuit press of March 1713 felt obliged to

point out, the work of this "anonymous" author is quite evidently impious and profane:

> La mort de Pindare & celle de Politien sont des modeles dont il est charmé: les idées qu'elles présentent choquent la nature même, & feroient honeur [sic] à la plûpart des débauchez; l'approbation que l'Auteur y donne découvre les abominations secrettes de son coeur, & les sources honteuses de son impiété.

It also resolved to oppose the author's admiration for pagans[5] and heretics with a clear statement of the "reasonable" techniques offered by Christianity: "Vivre en Chrétien est le seul moyen raisonnable de changer en douceur toute l'amertume de la mort" (M. de Tr., p. 422).[6] Thus Deslandes's treatise was branded as an impudent flaunting of Christian principles; thus, moreover, its notoriety was ensured (as a German writer has it) "through its opposition to the orthodox doctrine that recognizes only a death of despair or one of reconciliation with the Church" (Lange, Hist. of Mat., tr. Thomas, II, 90).[7] Not only, however, is there an implied opposition to the philosophia perennis, but, if we discount the fact that some examples are drawn from recent centuries, there is little in the work that would not be easily regarded as a translation into French from a pagan writer of somewhat imprecise philosophic tendencies.

This eclectic paganism was derived from many sources. Some details, for instance, are readily traced. In Montaigne he discovered the recommendation that, contemplating death, man should "s'apprivoiser à elle" (Ess., II, 56; vid. II, 64), and found apologies for felo-de-se (Ess., II, 224-225), based on the notion that suicide is sometimes permissible "pour fuir les maux de cette vie"(ibid, I, 64), since " la mort est la recepte à tous maux" (ibid, II, 27).[8] Above all, in the Essais he came across the stories of people "qui n'ont voulu abandonner leur gaudisserie en la mort mesme" (I, 60-61; cit. Réflex., pp. 120-121), and the suggestion that one could make a list of persons, of both sexes, who had faced their last hours in some unusual fashion (Ess., I, 64).[9] Again, he was indebted to the very moralists of the seventeenth century whose methods of presentation he deemed unacceptable to his own

generation. From La Rochefoucauld he borrowed the idea that vice and virtue are sometimes inextricably related (Max. CLXXXII), and the beginning of his twentieth chapter recalls the twenty-fourth Maxim: ("...à une grande vanité près, les héros sont faits comme les autres hommes"). From La Bruyère he adopted the idea: "Quelle sorte d'esprit étoit propre à faire fortune?", with which he introduced the fifth chapter (vid. Les Caract., Des Biens de la fortune); and, at the same time, tacitly rejected the judgement the earlier writer had made about D'Olonne: "Toute plaisanterie dans une homme mourant est hors de sa place..." (ed. 1865, II, 240).[10] From Bayle he drew his information regarding the deaths of Madame de Mazarin and Saint-Evremond (Oeuv. Div., 1731, Vols. III & IV: Lettr. CCCXXIX, CCCXLVII, Rép. aux quest., Chap. XXI). In Fontenelle, as we have already noted, he learned his basic view of mankind and discovered the condemnation of Cato's excessive sobriety.

Apart, however, from these influences, there are two precise statements about the author's personal inclinations which demand some investigation. Consider, for instance, the philosophic tendency he shares with the ecclesiastic, La Chapelle: "Il me semble que cela convient assez au Stoïcisme dont nous faisons tous deux profession" (p. 2). Now, whilst we may find this "Stoicism" readily reconcilable with the idea of reflecting on death whilst others pursue gayer pleasures, at first sight it clashes strangely not only with the title but also with the cult of volupté, débauche polie & spirituelle etc. that we find within the pages of this work. The emerging of Stoic and Epicurean notions was not, however, a new thing. Indeed, the history of philosophic movements would lead us to suppose that trend goes back to Seneca, who revealed eclectic tendencies by borrowing from the Epicureans in his attempt to commend Stoicism to the Romans; and to Cicero, who stressed the fundamental similarities between the two, particularly in respect of ethics. This interfusion is more evident still at the time of the Renaissance, when, under the name of Neo-Stoicism, we have a doctrine akin in some respects to that of

Deslandes's Réflexions. This doctrine is defined by Zanta in the following terms:

> Mais il y a un autre stoïcisme, tout proche de l'épicurisme, celui-là, qui viendra séduire en France les hommes de la Renaissance : c'est celui qui célébrera la bonté de la nature et s'exprimera dans la formule naturaliste du "vivre conformément à la Nature (La Renaissance du st. au XVIe s., p. 24)

Montaigne's "Stoicism" was very much on this model, and the seventeenth century offers examples of this eclectic doctrine of Seneca, Cicero and the Renaissance. For instance, in the Passions de l'âme Descartes shows that he has felt its effects: he does not accept the early Stoic notion that passions are evil in themselves, but asserts that they are harmful in excess. Similarly, although in his Entretien avec M. de Sacy he combats Stoicism, Pascal is none the less imbued with its moral grandeur and its determinism. Alongside an interpretation of Stoicism th t clashes in some particulars with the precepts of Zeno and Chrysippus, there was a parallel rehabilitation of Epicurus, long misrepresented as a debauched libertine.[11] Re-interpreted by Gassendi, Epicureanism was shown to be more than a sort of nonchalant cult of pleasure: pleasure, said the théologal de Digne, was only part of life - the leaven that lightened the whole. Life itself, as understood by Epicurus, had a nobler purpose altogether. As Brett explains: "Such a frame of mind is only distinguished from Stoicism by great liberality in the interpretation of life and a greater ability to compromise" (ed. 1908, p. xl) Consequently Stoicism and Epicureanism tend to merge to the profit of the latter: "Le stoïcisme...continue à inspirer la conduite de Guyet, comme quelquefois les façons d'être de Le Vayer. Cependant c'est surtout de l'épicurisme que, parmi les systèmes des Anciens, ils se réclament, au point que presque tous les représentants notables, en leur temps, de ces deux écoles, se rencontrent dans leurs rangs ou dans leur entourage" (Le Lib. érudit, I, 437).

Here Pintard has mentioned La Motte le Vayer, who was indeed at pains to reveal the virtuous moral values of Stoics and Epicureans alike. Here, for example, is his apology for Epicurus: "c'est une chose si constante que la volupté

d'Epicure estoit accompagnée de toute sorte de temperance...". Again, he quotes Seneca to explain that "les preceptes d'Epicure sont accompagnez non seulement de rectitude & de saincteté, mais encore d'austerité, s'ils sont considerez de prés. Sa Volupté consiste en fort peu de chose, & la reigle par les mesmes Loix que nous avons accoustumé de donner à la vertu" (Oeuv., 1654, I, pp. 633-635). What is more, he proceeds to point out that these opinions were expressed by one who is often regarded as the opponent of Epicureanism. In exactly similar manner he quotes Cicero, who, whilst disapproving of much of the Epicurean system, was bound to admit that its founder lived virtuously, and that his conception of volupté was "bleine de sobrieté, & plutost seche & aride, que molle & effeminée..." (ibid, pp. 635 & 638).

Thus far it is quite clear that Seneca and Cicero are constantly being mentioned in these discussions, since they softened the austere Stoicism of Zeno and his immediate successors. They are equally important if we approach the matter from the Epicurean side. "L'Orateur Romain", Deslandes tells us in his Histoire critique de la philosophie (II, 391), "conçut... une grande estime pour les Epicuriens...". Hence Gassendi's vulgarisateur, Bernier, was prepared to quote Seneca and Cicero in support of his friend's ideas. In the essay, De la philosophie en général, with which he prefaces his Abrégé of Gassendi's philosophy, the ethical rather than the metaphysical value of what he is to summarize (with modifications) is stressed. Philosophy, we are told, is the exercise of wisdom in embracing truth and in following honnêteté in one's conduct. Cicero is quoted to support the view that philosophy is the true "medicine of the soul", since it teaches mankind to love the gods and esteem society - in a word, because it is "la maîtresse des Moeurs", and Seneca is brought into the discussion to testify to the usefulness of philosophy in clearing the mind of prejudice and error, and therefore in making it free and tranquil. Throughout, the accent is firmly upon happiness, the sovereign good of Epicureans and Gassendists.

It is precisely this aspect of that philosophy that attracts Deslandes, and leads us to the second important statement of his allegiance in 1712-1714:

> Gassendi est le Philosophe qui a mis dans un plus beau jour les sentimens d'Epicure, & c'est aussi le Philosophe moderne que j'estime le plus. Sçavant sans rudesse & poli par tempérement, il n'a donné la Physique que pour ce qu'elle étoit, obscure, douteuse & souvent fausse. Il a plus insisté sur la Morale: c'est aussi la science qui devroit occuper l'homme uniquement, celle qui décide & du prix & de l'usage des plaisirs. Il est étonnant qu'on s'inquiéte de tant de choses inutiles, & qu'on néglige l'art de vivre agréablement (pp. 95-96)

Gassendi was not a great scientist, any more than he was an outstanding metaphysician. Deslandes will look abroad for scientific authorities and will continue to despise metaphysical "inanities". But he will never forget the Epicurean ethic, interpreted by Gassendi, and this early admission is so positive and precise that it demands some investigation. The question naturally arises: how much of Gassendi had our author actually read? The answer is, that in all Deslandes's works he never quotes from and very rarely refers to Gassendi's writings (H.c., II, 173, 341, 348).[12] But it is more than likely that he was familiar with the Abrégé,[13] and there is no doubt at all that, on several points, his view of Epicureanism accords with Bernier's. For instance, we have seen that the latter's preliminary essay stresses the ethical superiority of Gassendism. We have also seen that Bernier insists that honnêteté is promoted by Gassendi's apology: this virtue is equally praised in the Réflexions (p. 20). But surely the crucial question is the definition of the word volupté. Bernier's Abrégé points out that his friend derived his conception of voluptuousness from Epicurus rather than from Aristippus, who paid more attention to physical contentment than to mental tranquillity, which is in effect what Epicurus intended by the word volupté:

> ...comme il voyoit que les hommes, quelques choses qu'ils fissent, se portoient naturellement à quelque volupté, & qu'après avoir examiné toutes les especes de voluptez, il se fut apperceu qu'il n'y en avoit point de plus generale, de plus ferme, de plus stable, & de plus desirable que celle qui consiste dans la santé du Corps, & dans la tranquillité de l'Esprit; pour cette raison il la declara la fin des biens, ajoûtant que la Vertu seule estoit le vray instrument pour l'acquerir; & soutenant par consequent que l'homme Sage ou

vertueux estoit celuy, qui par la sobriété & par la continence, c'est à dire par la Vertu de Temperance se conservoit la santé du Corps, selon que sa constitution naturelle le permettoit, & qui aydé du concours des Vertus, par le moyen desquelles il calmoit les passions de l'Amour, de la Gourmandise, de l'Avarice, & de l'Ambition, s'appliquoit principalement à conserver autant qu'il estoit possible la tranquillité de l'Esprit... (Abr., VII, pp. 81-82).

Consequently, in the following page, Bernier depicts the opinion that Epicureanism means physical debauch as a conspiracy hatched by the Stoics who were jealous of the popularity of Epicurean ideas. The same defence of refined voluptuousness is made several times by Deslandes, who speaks of "cette douce volupté qui convient aux honnêtes gens" (p. 40), and who identifies it with "cette nonchalance, qui est le vrai & le premier sentiment d'une joie pure", asking: "Comme elle naît du repos de l'esprit, y a-t-il volupté qui lui soit préférable?" (p. 27). "L'honnête homme", he declares, "ne fuit point la volupté, quand elle est marquée au coin de la sagesse" (p. 20), and he appears firmly convinced of the superiority of what he later calls "la Volupté assise" (Réc., II, 173). Moreover, despite the use of the term "Stoicism" in the dedication, he is resolutely opposed to that "Philosophie austere & sauvage" of men like the Stoic Chrysippus, which he contrasts with the moderate hedonism of Epicurus, remarking: "personne n'a mieux sçû que lui, rendre la volupté raisonnable" (Réflex., pp. 94-95).

In theory, this is all very mild, balanced, and even respectable; but we cannot escape the fact that in 1712 his opposition to the severities of Ancient Stoicism carries him to a position which is not found in Bernier's Abrégé. We note, for example, how the latter interprets Gassendi's view of the Epicurean attitude to death:

> Car comme la Mort, selon l'observation qu'en faisoit Aristote, est estimée de tous les maux le plus horrible, en ce que personne n'en est exempt, & qu'elle est inevitable, Epicure pretend qu'on doit s'accoûtumer à y penser, afin d'apprendre par là à se défaire autant qu'il est possible de ces terreurs qui pourroient troubler la tranquillité, & par conséquent la felicité de la vie; & c'est pour cela qu'il tasche de persuader que bien loin qu'elle soit le plus horrible de tous les maux, elle n'est mesme pas un mal...(VII, pp. 21-22).

Now this is a moderate view of the business of dying, which merely aims at banning terror. Moreover, it immediately

follows a reasoned argument in favour of the soul's immortality, outlined under three headings: first, that all peoples agree in considering the soul immortal; second, that it is a natural desire of all mankind ; third, that the supposition of a future life is necessary to establish the operation of divine justice, which is not evident in this world (Abr. VI, Livre IV, Ch. 2). Deslandes's attitude to the affair is much less serious.[14] Indeed, by the very title he chooses, he is intent upon showing that facing death can the occasion for levity. Furthermore, as the Jesuit press pointed out, "son beau système d'une mort badine ne peut être établi que sur une démonstration exacte & sensible, qu'il n'y a ni Dieu, ni autre vie..." (M. de Tr., Mars 1713, p. 419). Whilst we do not find such a bold demonstration in the Réflexions, we come upon merely a hypothetical reference to the possibility of the Hereafter ("en mourant, il doit songer qu'il peut vivre encore" (p. 30)) - very different from the arguments of Gassendi, who,according to one historian of philosophy, "réfute les doutes élévés par les épicuriens sur l'immortalité de l'âme..." (Gérando, Hist. comp., II, 106).

Does this mean that Deslandes is closer to the Epicureans, whose doubts Gassendi "refuted"? He obviously does not think so himself, since, in the Réflexions (and with "doubtful authority", says J.M. Robertson (Short. Hist. of Freethought,ed.1914-1915, II, p. 66, n. 5)) he attributes to Gassendi himself the following doubts:

> Un de ses amis le vint voir, & l'ayant entretenu quelque tems sur sa maladie, lui demanda ce qu'il pensoit alors. Gassendi, après s'être bien assuré que personne ne pouvoit l'entendre, répondit en ces termes. Je ne sçai qui m'a mis au monde: j'ignore & quelle y étoit ma destinée & pourquoi l'on m'en retire. On peut compter sur une ignorance soutenuë de l'étude de quarante années (pp. 96-97).

Either Gassendi's "friend" did not report the truth, or L.M. Chaudon's Nouveau Dictionnaire historique of 1789 (IV, p.56 B) is naïve in declaring that this is inconsistent with what we know of Gassendi!

Of course, it really depends what is meant by the "philosophy of Gassendi", for it is a fact that, in later writings, the apologist of Epicurus deliberately repressed his early scepticism, treading simultaneously the parallel paths of private doubt and public prudence:

> Publiquement..., et avec une netteté irréparable, sa philosophie de concessions, de conciliations et de calculs l'emportera sur ce qui avait éte la philosophie de ses années de jeunesse, de ses confidences amicales, de ses polémiques, de son libre instinct" (Pintard, Le Lib. érud., I, 501).

Thus the crucial phrase in the passage from the Réflexions we have just quoted is "après s'être bien assuré que personne ne pouvoit l'entendre...". Deslandes was probably well aware of the real motives that led Gassendi to make what Pintard calls this "pacte de trahison" (ibid, I, 501), and was in any case close enough to Gassendi's philosophic heirs to learn some of these "confidences amicales" and consequently some of the master's secret opinions. Indeed, at the time when the Réflexions were being composed there was a group of merry gentlemen putting into practice some of the precepts contained therein:

> La petite société du Temple, présidée par l'abbé de Chaulieu, quoique composée en majorité de vieillards, n'en était pas pour cela plus orthodoxe. Ces voluptueux ne s'étaient pas assagis en s'approchant du terme; le voisinage de la tombe ne semblait être pour eux qu'une raison de plus de se hâter et de jouir de ces dernières heures de grâce (Desnoiresterres, Volt. et la soc. au XVIIIe s., I, 89).

Yet this cult of pleasure was not found to be incompatible with a form of "Stoicism", which Desnoiresterres suspects in the young Voltaire, who frequented this very circle:[15]

> L'on a vingt ans, et l'on ne parle pas autrement que le vieux Chaulieu; mêmes pensées, mêmes aphorismes de philosophie païenne: le plaisir envisagé comme le seul but sérieux, et, dans les plus rudes traverses, un stoïcisme qui annule la tristesse substitué à une sensibilité stérile devant des pertes irréparables (op. cit., I, 98).

There, indeed, are the main points we have noted about Deslandes: the pagan doctrines, the cult of pleasure combined with a sort of "Stoicism" which is not only compatible with the philosophy of Epicurus, not only complements it, but in fact is to be discerned in current expressions of it.

It is interesting to see, for instance, how the Bibliothèque raisonnée of 1732, casting a backward glance in time, defines Chaulieu's attitude to death, and, in so doing, stresses the unflinching calmness and unconventional gaiety of which it was composed:

> M. L'Abbé de Chaulieu devoit cette profonde tranquillité à la Philosophie d'Epicure, qu'il avoit toujours suivie. C'étoit elle, qui en l'accoutumant à regarder la mort d'un oeil fixe, & à n'en pas apprehender trop les suites, lui donnoit sur l'autre monde des idées plus gaïes, que ne les inspirent ordinairement les réflexions que l'on fait sur cette matière... (VIII, Jan-Mars, p. 10).

It is even more interesting to hear the good Abbé speak for himself on the subject. In 1713 he tells his friend La Fare that he is:

> Aussi prêt à souffrir avecque patience
> Les besoins de la pauvreté,
> Que de jouir de l'abondance
> Dans les bras de la volupté.

He continues:

> A ma stoïque indifférence,
> Qui tient, je l'avoûrai, de la férocité,
> Je joignis, tu le sçais, quelque talent de plaire.
> Libertin&voluptueux...(Oeuvr., ed. 1757, II, 343).

Another of his friends, J-B Rousseau, addressing a poem to him, claims:

> ...dans la pureté
> Des innocens banquets du Temple,
> De raison & de fermeté
> J'ai fait une moisson trop ample,
> Pour être jamais infecté
> D'une sordide avidité (Odes etc., ed. 1790, p. 545).

Whether the Temple suppers were as "innocent" as the poet pretends, the word fermeté suggests a certain cult of steadfastness not out of harmony with Stoicism, as understood by his friend Chaulieu. Nor is it different from the "Stoicism" of the Réflexions, the author of which admires the fermeté of the Duc de Montmorency, of De Thou and Saint-Marc (p. 117).

The cult of pleasure and the cult of fortitude[16] thus converge in a philosophy not unlike that of the habitués of the Temple Society. We are not surprised then when, informing his reader about the advice Ninon de Lenclos received from her father, the author of the Réflexions claims: "Je tiens ces particularitez d'un homme d'esprit,

qui m'a assuré les avoir apprises de Mademoiselle de Lenclos" (p. 79). What sort of a person would this informer be? Surely it is more than likely that he was one of that circle of libertines who had grouped themselves around this charming devotee of voluptuousness - someone like Voltaire, perhaps, who, though slightly younger than Deslandes, had none the less had the advantage of being introduced by the Abbé de Châteauneuf to the great Ninon, during his schooldays at Louis-le-Grand.[17] The philosophic posterity of Gassendi, of Ninon and her friends, and of Chaulieu and his associates of the Temple thus assumes a considerable importance in our study of Deslandes's Réflexions;[16] and it is to a survey of this evolution of libertinism that we must next proceed.

b) The Influence of the Epicurean Circles

One of the most enlightening articles in the great Encyclopédie is Epicuréisme, composed by Diderot himself. In it the author traces the evolution of the Epicurean tradition from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries, following the thread through the libertine circles that flourished during that period. Naturally he begins with Gassendi, whose disciples (we are told) were Chapelle, Molière, Bernier, Chaulieu, the Grand Prieur de Vendôme, the Chevalier de Bouillon, the Maréchal de Catinat. The first of the circles proper was formed about the middle of the seventeenth century at the house of Ninon de Lenclos in the Rue de Tournelles, where the habitués included Madame Scarron, the Comtesse de Suze, the Comtesse d'Olonne, Saint-Evremond (who with Madame de Mazarin carried the tradition to England). Another offshoot of the Tournelles Society was to take root in the Temple, in the Marais district of Paris, where the Vendôme brothers and Chaulieu proved themselves to be worthy successors of the illustrious Ninon. Diderot also indicates that there was another group, consisting of those who had been members of the Salon de Rambouillet, and who, having turned

from Platonism to Epicureanism, deserted Madame de Rambouillet for Mademoiselle de Lenclos. Bernier, Chapelle and Molière transferred this school to Auteuil, where it numbered amongst its members Bachaumont, De Blot and Desbarreaux. Hardly had it been formed, however, than it was merged with a group at Anet (Beauce), which was a sort of country branch of the Temple Society.

In one way or another, therefore, the Temple Society tends to absorb the smaller streams; and, since Deslandes was educated chiefly in Paris, it is this group, which was certainly in existence in 1706 and continued to flourish up till the Regency and again after that year 1715, when the Grand Prieur returned from exile (Desn., Volt. et la soc. etc. I, pp. 39-40, 96), that concerns us here. The leader was, of course, Philippe de Vendôme, whose brother combined a military career with a life of debauch, and whose able intendant, Chaulieu (the "New Anacreon") became the most renowned of the literary figures of the society and maintained this position throughout his long life, and especially during the exile of his chief. Other frequenters of the Temple during the later period were La Fare, Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, the Abbé Courtin, Campistron, Palaprat, De Breteuil (father of the Marquise du Châtelet), the Président de Mesmes, Dangeau, the Duc de Nevers, De Catinat, the Comte de Fiesque, the Duc de Randan, De Périgny, Renier, De Lasseré and the Duc de la Feuillade. The Temple Society also had a "splinter-group" at Saint Maur, where it was conducted under the leadership of Madame la Duchesse, the grand-daughter of Condé. Finally, it had a close affiliation with the Sceaux circle of Madame du Maine, in which elegance, politeness and the cult of Volupté went hand in hand, and where Fontenelle, Saint Aulaire, the Abbé Genet (affectionately known as Pégase), Malezieu (familiarly called Maître Curé), La Motte and Voltaire were often to be found.[19]

"La Régence eut ses précurseurs, elle procède du Temple, dont elle va prendre le ton", says Desnoiresterres (op. cit. I, 96). There is no doubt that, during the last years of the Grand Règne and during the Regency, a pagan, hedonist cult was in full vigour behind the stout walls of that ancient fortress in the Rue de la Verrerie - that refuge of debtors and of artisans not recognized by their corporations. The grim, forbidding external appearance was misleading, for it was not only a place of sanctuary but the scene of nightly revelry and debauch (Ms. d'Argenson, Mém., ed. 1825, pp. 285-294). The Duc de Saint-Simon may be spiteful when he reports that the Grand Prieur was carried to bed in a drunken stupor every night (or morning) for thirty years (Perrens, Les Lib. en Fr. au XVIIe s., p. 423), but there is probably more than a grain of truth in this startling assertion. Perrens speaks of the drunken cries; of the bacchanalia in which Mademoiselle Delaunay figured so prominently; of the light verses and impious songs that were so common in this place. In particular, the joys of the table were never more appreciated. Witness, for example, Chaulieu's lines on the inevitable omelette au lard, propitiously timed to revive failing appetites and doubly appreciated because of the hour at which it was served:

> ...avec des cris de joie
> On voit, toujours sur le tard,
> Venir l'omelette au lard
> Qu'au secours de ta faim le ciel propice envoie!
> (Lettre à La Fare, cit. Perrens, p. 427)

As we have already suggested, no man was more representative of the group than the Abbé de Chaulieu. In his Mémoires President Hénault tells of the excellent supper that could be had in the intendant's rooms:

> L'abbé de Chaulieu était un homme de bonne chère, dans le genre de Saint Evremont; il était attaché à M. de Vendôme. Nous soupions tous les jours chez le Grand-Prieur; nous chantions et nos soupers valaient bien ceux d'aujourd'hui, où l'on se met à table pour critiquer les plats et disserter, mais dont la gaîté est à jamais bannie. L'abbé de Chaulieu a laissé des vers et quelques chansons, dont on a fait plus de cas que cela ne méritait. Tous nos petits poètes citent à tous moments La Fare et Chaulieu. (ed. Fr. Rousseau, p. 361, vid. p. 112)

Clearly, then, the Temple poets who had most surely caught the imagination of young versifiers of the day were Chaulieu and La Fare.[20] That Deslandes is to be numbered amongst these admirers is borne out by a study of his French poems. The most valid proof must proceed from the Poésies diverses, which appeared in editions of the Réflexions after and including that of 1714,[21] and which had been sent to London to Desmaizeaux in 1713 (vid. Birch MSS 4283); but we shall have occasion to remark that the influence of the Temple poets persists in verses published when Deslandes was middle-aged.

The topics that figure most often in the poems of the Temple are the cult of love and of wine, a passion for idleness and retreat, and a general devotion to the Epicurean way of life. Tirelessly are the praises of Bacchus and Venus sung by Chaulieu and La Fare. For instance, in the ninth of his odes the latter declares: "On écrira mon histoire,/ Dans les fastes de Vénus;/ Comme on chantera ma gloire,/ Dans les fastes de Bacchus." (Oeuvres, ed. 1731, p. 26); and, in the fourth ode (Ode à l'Amour), his enthusiasm is equally evident. To Venus he cries: "Publions donc ta gloire,/ Que, plus fort que tous les Dieux,/ Pour la plus grande victoire,/ Tu n'armes que deux beaux yeux" (ibid, pp. 11-12). Similarly, in his Vérité égayée, we find an adoration of Bacchus enveloped in that kind of philosophic conceit which distinguishes the contemporary genre of drinking-song from those of the seventeenth century:

> De l'homme voici la chimere.
> Pour lui tout naît, pour lui tout se détruit;
> C'est pour lui que tourne la sphere;
> Tout l'Univers pour lui seul est construit.
> . . . . . .
> Mais je m'apperçoi
> Que ce vin est fait pour moi,
> Lorsque je le boi. (ibid, p. 44)

His clerical friend, Chaulieu, is equally enamoured of the god of wine. He counsels J-B Rousseau: "Pour toi, passe les nuits à table,/ Entre Bacchus & tes amis" (Oeuvres, ed. 1757, II, 257; ed. 1774, I, 172); and his Chant de débauche, addressed to the Duc de Vendôme, begins: "Commençons, mes amis, à boire..." (Oeuv., ed. 1774, II, 285). Wine, the sovereign remedy against

mental depression; love, the most perfect expression of volunté -- these are the deities they honour at the Temple. But, even in the "debauch" they prize, affections and appetites are tempered by some restraint. It is a question of respecting good taste and consequently of achieving maximum enjoyment in the end. In his ninth ode La Fare sounds a note of caution as he recalls the virtue of temperance preached by Gassendi: "Que sensible au goût des plaisirs,/ Eloigné de l'intempérance,/ Je forme encor quelques desirs,/ Sans sortir de la bienséance" (Oeuv., p. 27).[22] Chaulieu does not conceive volupté otherwise, since the principles of the connoisseur cannot be disregarded without loss. "La volupté est l'art d'user des plaisirs avec délicatesse et de les goûter avec sentiment", says Perrens in an attempt to interpret Chaulieu's view of the matter (op. cit.,p.438). Certainly, despite what we read in Saint-Simon and elsewhere about the "orgies" of the Temple Society, in 1713 the "New Anacreon" (writing to the Chevalier de Bouillon) does not overlook the need for delicacy and restraint in enjoyment:

> Chevalier, c'est peu qu'au Temple
> Je t'aie appris comment, dans la belle saison,
> Avec des talens de plaire,
> Un homme sage doit faire
> D'amour & de plaisirs une douce moisson. (Oeuv., ed. 1757, II, 330; ed. 1774, II, 21)

This, then, is the gentle art of living: it is the true culture from which we can reap a fine harvest, unspoiled by the bitterness of remorse. In the opinion of both Chaulieu and his faithful friend that art cannot be learned at Court; for the state of idleness, which is its prerequisite, is ruined by bustle and formality. La Fare explains:

> Donc un vrai desir m'excite
> A parvenir au séjour
> Que le vrai bonheur habite;
> Car, le chercher à la Cour,
> Parmi tant de misérables,
> Et d'infortunés coupables
> Qui gémissent dans les fers,
> C'est du monde, en son enfance,
> Vouloir trouver l'innocence,
> Et le vrai calme aux enfers. (Oeuv., pp. 15-16)

His comrade in hedonism, J-B. Rousseau, reminds Chaulieu that riches, diligently amassed, are less valuable than the rewards of idleness: "Et souviens-toi que la Richesse/ Que donne l'assiduité,/ Ne vaut pas la sainte Paresse/ Qu'un sage Libertin professe/ Avec joyeuse pauvreté" (in Chaul. Oeuv., ed. 1757, II, 257; ed. 1774, I, 172); and, in his eighth ode, finds the Abbé's recipe for happiness superior to that of an Ancient Cynic:

> Crois-moi, suis plutôt l'exemple
> De tes amis casaniers,
> Et reviens goûter, au Temple,
> L'ombre de tes marroniers.
>
> Dans ce salon pacifique
> Où président les neuf soeurs,
> Un loisir philosophique
> T'offre encor d'autres douceurs:
>
> Là, nous trouverons sans peine
> Avec toi, le verre en main,
> L'homme après qui Diogène
> Courut si long-temps en vain;
>
> Et, dans la douce alégresse
> Dont tu sais nous abreuver,
> Nous puiserons la sagesse,
> Qu'il chercha sans la trouver. (Odes etc, ed. 1700, p.91)

Nor do the philosophic poets of the Temple forget their illustrious authorities. Epicurus himself - though not always properly understood by the "Epicureans" of the period - is of course the fountain-head; and the best tribute that La Fare can pay his friend, Chaulieu, is to call him: "sectateur d'Epicure" (Oeuvr., p. 23). J-B. Rousseau pays a similar compliment by connecting the Abbé with the Gallic heir to the best Epicurean tradition, Rabelais:

> C'est dans ce bon esprit Gaulois
> Que le gentil Maître François
> Appelle Pantagruélisme,
> Qu'à Neuilli La Fare & Sonning
> Puisent cet enjoûment benin
> Dont se forme leur Atticisme. (in Chaul., Oeuvr., ed. 1757, II, 261; ed. 1774, I, 175-176)

Love, idleness, retreat, and the Epicurean tradition - that is the poetic and philosophic heritage of the libertine circles. It remains to show how closely Deslandes followed these models. The cult of love and wine is quite evident in the Poésies diverses. An outstanding example is the Chanson,

which begins: "Que Bacchus, que l'Amour envoie/ De tendres Buveurs en ces lieux", and concludes: "Faisons balancer la victoire/ Entre le bon Vin & l'Amour" (in Réflex., 1732, p.137). In his case too, moderation and good taste temper sensuous delights. We note, for example, what he esteems in the "good old days": "Chacun soigneux d'écouter la Nature,/ Point n'estimoit immoderez plaisirs,/ Qui sont sujets à vaine repentance;/ Mais par flateuse & douce accoutumance,/ Sçavoit regler ses voeux & ses desirs" (ibid, p. 159). That is the middle course, marked out by "Nature", the guide of all true Epicureans. He is also singularly devoted in all his poetic works to the pursuit of idleness, and to what he frequently calls literary or philosophic leisure. We cite in evidence the poems printed at the end of the last volume of the Histoire critique de la philosophie (1756). In Mon Cabinet the poet considers that the boredom of a routine occupation would not be bettered by residence at Court, where one may find "les passions folles,/ Dont les Rois mêmes sont épris". He adds: "Leurs goûts, leurs soins frivoles,/ Tout m'inspire un juste mépris" (H.c., IV, 188). There follows the Hymne à la Paresse (which may well have been inspired by Le Fare's famous ode on the subject), and there we read: "Guidé par tes conseils, trop utile Paresse,/ Je connus tout le prix d'un studieux loisir;/ Mon coeur ne chercha point la brillante richesse,/ Moins jaloux d'amasser que de sçavoir jouir" (H.c., IV, 201-202). How very reminiscent it is of Rousseau's lines to Chaulieu! Again, like the same poet, Deslandes rejects the severity of sober wisdom. To his friend Dr. Silvestre he pays this tribute: "Docteur fameux, qui sçais de la Sagesse/ Par dits badins éjoüir l'apreté/ Et qui cherchant la douce Volupté,/ As de ton coeur banni vaine tristesse" (in Réflex., ed. 1732, p. 158). Nor was our poet less obsequious to the great ones of the Epicurean and Gallic heritage than were his models. The poem of 1714, Le Pantagruélisme, which has recently been mentioned in an article by M. Saulnier and which led him to refer to Deslandes as "un pantagruéliste oublié

du siècle philosophique",[23] in fact merely echoes the regard for Epicurus and Rabelais we found in the contemporary or recent verses of Chaulieu and La Fare; for not only does he pay tribute to "Maître François, honneur du tems passé", but he adds: "Ainsi vivoit le très-bon Epicure,/ Homme benoît, ami de la Nature" (in Réflex., p. 136).

Do we still doubt the inspiration which Deslandes received from the Temple poets? If so, we cannot do better than take account of the following parallels. A minor poet of the Society, Jacques Vergier,[24] who, like Deslandes was in the naval administration, composed these anachreontic verses, which we shall find similar to the lines of Deslandes dedicated to Bacchus and Venus:

> Chacun peut dans ce charmant séjour
> Suivre à son gré Bacchus, ou le Dieu de l'Amour;
> Mais pour choisir avec justice,
> Qu'on choisisse
> L'un & l'autre tour-à-tour. (Oeuvres, ed. 1780, I, 187)

How similar also are the first lines of two poems devoted to Iris, which tell of the lady's irresistible attractions:

> Iris, que votre voix est tendre,
> Et que vos yeux sont dangereux..(ibid, I, 224)
>
> Iris, je ne puis m'en défendre,
> L'Amour va briller dans mon coeur..(in Réflex., p. 135)

Furthermore, it is from Vergier's Chansons that Deslandes admittedly derives his conception of the petit souper in Pigmalion (ed. 1742, pp. 106-107, n. (d)), and from the same poet's Epître à M. de la Ferrière (1694, Oeuv., III, 31) that he actually quotes in the Optique des moeurs of 1742:

> Vergier
> J'entens Prélats, Abbés, riches Prieurs,
> Tant indulgens pour leur propre molesse,
> Et contre autrui si sévores crieurs.
>
> Deslandes (without acknowledgement)
> /Les Prêtres qui sont, comme vous sçavez,/
> Gens indulgens à leur propre molesse
> Et contre autrui si sévères crieurs,
> (with Pigm., ed. 1742, p. 195)

Finally, with the following lines of Vergier:

> Enfin c'est en ce séjour,
> Que, sans compter un seul jour;
> J'attendrai l'heure ordonnée
> Pour fin de ma destinée,
> Du même esprit, du même oeil
> Dont après chaque journée,
> Je vois la nuit ramenée
> Et de pavots couronnée,

Me plonger dans le sommeil. (Oeuvr., III, 74)

we might profitably compare:

Ainsi, pour grace entiere,
Puissé-je arriver doucement
A cette heure dernière,
Où cesse tout déguisement!

. . . . . .

Doux sommeil, dernier terme,
Que le sage attend sans effroi,
Je verrai d'un oeil ferme
Tout passer, tout s'enfuir de moi. (Deslandes, H.c. IV, pp. 198-199)

The same note of resignation is there; the same determination to regard death as a sleep; but in Deslandes there is the added hint at annihilation. Yet the difficulty of attributing such ideas to any particular writer is seen if we now return to a more important Temple poet. In 1695, 1700 and 1708 Chaulieu published his Trois facons de penser sur la mort, of which the third is most interesting to us. Composed "dans les principes d'Epicure et de Lucrèce", it appears in several respects to anticipate the stanzas from Mon Cabinet just quoted:

Aux pensers de la mort accoutume ton ame:
. . . . . .
La mort est simplement le terme de la vie;
De peines, ni de biens elle n'est point suivie.
C'est un asyle sûr, c'est la fin de nos maux,
C'est le commencement d'un éternel repos;
Et, pour s'en faire encore une plus douce image,
Ce n'est qu'un paisible sommeil,
Que, par une conduite sage,
La loi de l'univers engage
A n'avoir jamais de réveil. (Oeuv., ed. 1757, II, 319; ed. 1774, I, 23)

Let us look finally as another pair of stanzas from the same poem of Deslandes and relate them to the work of another Temple poet of the first rank. In the 1731 edition of La Fare's poetic works we come upon a piece entitled Réflexions d'un Philosophe sur une belle Campagne, in which the following quatrains are to be found:

Esclaves de tous nos abus,
Victimes de tous nos caprices,
Nous ne donnons plus qu'à des vices,
Les noms des premieres vertus.

Heureux habitans de ces plaines,
Qui vous bornez dans vos desirs,
Si vous ignorez nos plaisirs,
Vous ne connoissez pas nos peines. (pp. 4-5)

These lines are plagiarized by Deslandes to form the following verses of Mon Cabinet:

> Habitans de ces plaines,
> Qui vous bornez dans vos desirs,
> Vous ignorez nos peines,
> Si vous n'avez point nos plaisirs.
>
> Pleins de mille caprices,
> Environnés de mille abus,
> Nous donnons à nos vices
> Tous les noms dûs à vos vertus. (in H.C., IV, 194)

Thus the imitation of the Temple poets goes beyond a mere ideological similarity. From these men he has sometimes borrowed the very words he uses; and, whilst there is no direct evidence that he ever visited the Temple, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that the young Deslandes, educated in Paris, retailing in the Réflexions a confidence imparted by a friend of Ninon, and generally imbued with the ideas of Chaulieu and his friends, actually came into contact with some of these poets. This supposition becomes increasingly credible when we take account of some of the friendships made during his London visit and of some passages to be found in the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre.

CHAPTER II DES AUDES, FONTENELLE AND THE SALONS

"Le caractère qui s'appuie également sur l'orgueil & sur la délicatesse me paroît le plus propre à se défendre contre l'ennui: & c'est le caractère des femmes" (L'Art de ne point s'ennuyer, ed. 1715, p. 133).

"Le nombre des dames, qui ont illustré ce beau siècle, est une des grandes preuves des progrès de l'esprit humain" (Voltaire, Oeuvr., ed. Moland, XIV, 86).

"...en général les Anciens n'étoient gueres sensibles à ce plaisir délicat, & qui touche si fort les honnêtes gens, à ce commerce mutuel, & où l'on est, pour ainsi dire, de plein-pied les uns avec les autres; à la conversation en un mot. Je ne sçai quel air de contrainte gâtoit toutes leurs manieres, ils se dépouilloient rarement du mérite acquis, pour laisser agir un certain esprit natural qui fait le charme des sociétés" (Histoire critique de la philosophie, I, 317)

a) The Art de ne point s'ennuyer[25]

Published in the year of the birth of Vauvenargues and before Prévost and Marivaux had made their mark with the roman sentimental, the Art de ne point s'ennuyer is of some historic importance. The Preface makes it unequivocally plain that society is restless and constrained, and that life has become insipid and monotonous. As he did in the Réflexions, Deslandes claims that he is addressing his remarks to the most polite and polished members of society - that is, to those who have a well developed taste. Indeed, he even expresses the hope that certain recipes for contentment should not be understood by the multitude. What, then, is the cure for social malaise, that he offers to the cultured few?

In the Art de ne point s'ennuyer, and with constant digression and often tedious redundancy, Deslandes follows a plan centred round seven questions: 1) What is human nature, and what are its needs?; 2) What are the problems that arise out of different social environments?; 3) How may a man best foster those tastes proper to his own happiness?; 4) How may a man achieve success in conversation?; 5) How should one choose the books one reads?; 6) What is the value of cultivating the society of women?; 7) What is the right technique for dispelling boredom.

The answers provide a fair summary of the author's argument. In the first place, he has a poor opinion of mankind. Nourished by self-interest and self-love, folly is not only universal but eternal. It is therefore possible to regard man as a sort of constant, and consequently to study his nature. Now, in his folly, man is generally uneasy in the company of his fellows. There lies the problem. The Ancient Stoics would have had us seek insensibility as a solution to man's vagaries and to life's misfortunes. This is, however, no solution at all; for passions are necessary to animate the sentiments, and, incuring social uneasiness, sentiment is more valuable than intellect. For it is a fact that spontaneous gaiety is an excellent antidote to boredom, whereas the sober rationalist often drives himself deeper into melancholy. Something more than mere reasoning is therefore required, and this additional factor is what our author calls "mental debauch". This kind of debauch divides a man's interests between pleasure and reflection, and provides a fund of sensuous memories to recollect in solitude, and of knowledge to utilize in the daily round. This leads naturally to the second question: as he lives and moves about each day, how will he behave in different environments? The answer is that, just as we should choose our studies according to the advantages likely to accrue, so (as far as possible) should we select our circles of acquaintance to suit ourselves. But man is not in the company of others all the time. The master of the art of being easy will find satisfaction in solitude too - or, like Ovid, even in exile. Indeed, that solitude that results from escaping from the hurly-burly of civil society is an excellent agent for controlling too violent passions. The pastoral conceit is an illustration of this fact and a splendid image of this kind of retirement - a retirement that is mental and emotional as well as physical (which, in fact, it need not necessarily be). We are reminded once more of man's folly; of his almost universal enslavement to passions

which reason appears powerless to control, and of man's apparent inability to learn from experience. The author returns to the point he is discussing, asking this time if all men benefit equally from solitude. He replies that, since man is made for society, many find their best environment in capital cities (rather than in small provincial towns), and it is the philosopher who is most contented in solitude. This leads to the third question: how may an intelligent man cultivate his tastes? He should do so by avoiding pedantry, 26 which is useless to society; and by reading and meditating, socially beneficial which are, whatever common prejudice may assert to the contrary. For it is in studious leisure that true taste is nurtured - in alliance between restrained hedonism and moderate rationalism. We should exploit and develop the tastes received from nature, using reason and artistry to control those passions that would drive us to excess. This golden mean between passion and reason is illustrated from the wider social context in a reference to a tastefully conducted meal, the true enjoyment of which springs from gaiety and jest, from music and song, and never from ostentation or vulgarity.

The mention of such a social occasion brings him to the fourth question, concerning the all-important art of conversation. Pedants will converse purely in obedience to the dictates of logic and reason, and they are excessively dull. On the other hand, those who have mastered the delicate art disdain formal rules and follow the dictates of their emotions. For sincerity, which is infinitely more effective than affectation or scholarly wit, feeds upon an imagination that shuns extremes. Few, however, are the people who speak from the heart; and, although we may try hard to associate with persons of our own choosing, we must perforce find ourselves in the company of fools, dominated by their passions or by their reason. However, this is not so unfortunate as it may appear. Learning by the mistakes of others, we can confirm our resolve to pursue different policies.

Deslandes brings this section to a close with a reminder that, if we find ourselves out of harmony with our fellows, we should not necessarily find fault with them, but always examine ourselves first to see whether we are to blame.

The next two questions are concerned with adjuncts to polite conversation. How, he asks, may we stimulate the imagination? He answers: by reading and by cultivating the society of the opposite sex. Moreover, since sincerity be our aim, we should choose the works of authors who write to please or who speak to us from the heart[27] - that is, of writers who are both entertaining and natural. If we do so, we shall endear ourselves to the ladies; and our author reminds us that amorous fancies and innocent coquetry are a fertile source of interest in conversation. Women, he adds, never vary their tastes, and are at ease only with persons whom they like. The secret of success, then, is to make one's self pleasing to them, by being proper in behaviour, yet gay and gallant in approach. The rewards will amply repay the effort expended, for women are particularly gifted with the knack of dispelling boredom; and, striking a happy medium between pride and delicacy, have within themselves sufficient ways of satisfying their own emotional and intellectual needs. Above all, they feel more than they think; and this observation brings the exponent of the art of being easy in society to the conclusion of his treatise. It is man's pride and ambition that make him restless and ill-at-ease: it is his reason that causes him to ponder and worry unnecessarily, and thus to destroy the precious delights that proceed from sensation and sentiment. And if mankind in the mass presents a ridiculous spectacle, all is not lost, since the individual can reject those passions that come from Nature, and, by delicate artistry, form others upon their model. That is the true art of dispelling boredom.

This treatise, presented (as we have said) in a discursory and repetitious manner that obscures logical argument, contains moreover a number of statements that may well be challenged.

For instance, the bold remark that "we cannot create new tastes" or that "women never vary their tastes" are too dogmatic and exclusive to be true. Nor does the writer seem quite clear in his own mind about the value of learning, about the merits of exercising reason or about the advantages of a rural setting. In the first two cases we may perhaps excuse him on the grounds that his schooldays were not far behind him; in the last, that he was deliberately sympathizing with the unfortunate "exile" to whom he dedicated his book. Furthermore, we may perceive in this work the continued influence of the Epicurean circles which prized good taste and sensuous delights more than rigid logic or sober reason. The charge of obscurity and inconsistency none the less remains.

Nor is this ill-digested essay as original as its author would have us believe in his Preface. In fact, it owes much to Montaigne, whose Trois Commerces were the conversation of honnêtes hommes, the society of belles et honnestes femmes and. disdain the reading of books (Ess., ed. Villey, III, 45-60); and whose of those learned pedants who "font tousjours parade de leur magistere et sement leurs livres par tout" (ibid, III, 50) is echoed in this book (p. 117). Like the Réflexions, it is also indebted to the moralists whose methods he considered out of date. We recall, for example, that La Rochefoucauld's Maximes are often concerned with the same problem of avoiding boredom (CXLI, CLXXII, CCCIV, CCCLII, DCXI, DCXXXIV), and that his Réflexions diverses include two items entitled De la société and De la conversation, devoted to subjects analogous to those treated by Deslandes. Other details spring to mind: from La Rochefoucauld he quotes the maxim about lovers ("On parle toujours de soi-même" (p. 121)), and accepts the moralists theory of society as impelled by self-interest and self-love (Max. II and XXXIX). suggesting that meditation teaches us what we owe to each (p. 4). Again, La Bruyère devotes a chapter of Les Caractères to the topic, De la société et de la conversation. In it we find the same horror of the social "stuffiness" of small towns (ed. Servois, I, 233; L'Art etc. p.

67); both authors ascribe social uneasiness partly to excess of imagination (L'Art, p. 5) and both share Montaigne's view that pedantry is the mortal enemy of good intercourse(ibid, p. 106). Again, La Bruyère's statement that people do not like to admire you too much is echoed in "le bonheur ne consiste point à être distingué des autres hommes" (ibid, p. 90). Thus, whilst in the Preface to the Réflexions he appeared to scorn maxims and moralizing, he does not hesitate to embody a number of the moralists' ideas in his own treatise on boredom. Indeed, a great deal of the book consists of pure maxims: "le rôle que joue l'esprit paroît composé de tout ce qui manque à celui que joue la fortune" (p. 14); "la nature n'est jamais plus belle que dans les bornes qu'elle se prescrit" (p. 39); "il ne faut ~~~~ être trop essentiel ni trop profond dans le monde poli" (p. 97) - the examples could be multiplied almost indefinitely. Finally, when (at the beginning of his eleventh chapter) Deslandes quotes from the Abbé Bellegarde's Modèles de conversations (ed. 1709, pp. 232-237), he acknowledges his indebtedness to a writer who was still alive in 1715. The influence is immediately evident when we read the Abbé's Modèles and Réflexions sur ce qui peut plaire ou déplaire dans le commerce du monde, the Avertissements of which alone supply the following phrases that recur in Deslandes's work: "Les hommes sont faits pour la société..."; "la Conversation ne demande rien d'étudié, ou de contraint..."; "il n'y a point de plaisir plus exquis, ni plus délicat, que celui que l'on goûte dans le commerce des personnes agréables..."; "Ceux qui commencent à entrer dans les monde, doivent s'étudier avec beaucoup de soin à s'y mettre sur le pied d'honnêtes gens.." "En remarquant les extravagances des autres, on prend garde d'y tomber." (Vth and IVth edns., resp. Amst., 1709).

Yet the true value of the Art de ne point s'ennuyer is not to be established by looking backward in time. As we have already suggested, Deslandes's forgotten treatise is a precious document in the history of eighteenth-century sensibility. Mornet begins the chapter "Les Premiers Remous"

(Le Romantisme en France au XVIIIe siècle) with a phrase from Madame de Lambert's Avis à sa fille - which he dates as 1734, although an edition had appeared in 1727! - and Trahard reproves Lanson for situating the beginnings of sensibility around the year 1700 (Les Maîtres etc., I, 12-13). At the same time Trahard claims that, whilst it was never completely stifled in the seventeenth century, one should situate its real and vivid origins about the time of Manon Lescaut, La Vie de Marianne and Zaïre: "alors seulement, la sensibilité française, qui s'est éveillée dès 1720 avec les premières comédies de Marivaux, devient assez forte pour créer une forme d'art originale" (ibid, p. 15). Deslandes's book of 1715 is important, therefore, first as an early manifestation of the trend discernible around the year 1720 and a positive plea for sensibility and sentiment as opposed to reason and reflection; secondly, as a proof that boredom and restlessness at the close of Louis XIV's reign was a contributory factor to the "awakening" which Trahard perceives five years later.

It is important in two other ways: first, as an early attempt at the study of the mind - as a primitive essay in psychology, which, in a small way anticipates Helvétius, who says: "L'ennui est une maladie de l'âme. Quel en est le principe? L'absence de sensations assez vives pour nous occuper" (De l'homme, Sect. VIII, Ch. VI); secondly, as a means of linking its author with the salons of his time and with "le mondain le plus incorrigible", Fontenelle (Carré, Font. etc., p. 589).

b) The Hôtel de Nevers and Fontenelle

The date of the first edition of the work we are studying suggests that it was written by Deslandes after his return from London, and during the period when he lodged in the Rue des Fossés in Montmartre with his brother-in-law, Mouffle de La Tuillerie. The Preface, dated July 31st 1714,

also bears an indication of the place of composition. We hardly need to be told, however, since the ascendancy of Paris over him is evident throughout the work. Besides, since it is addressed to polite society, we think of the salon of the Marquise de Lambert and of one of its most famous members, Fontenelle.[28]

Let us first investigate the part which the Hôtel de Nevers in the Rue de Richelieu[29] may have played in forming our author's ideas at this time. In his Mémoires, the Marquis d'Argenson informs us that the hostess who wielded such enormous power in the choice of members of the Academy was distinguished by her "tendresse constante" (ed. 1825, p. 285). In his work on the salons, Picard depicts her as being one of the first ladies who interested themselves in "philosophy"; as balancing a lack of religious faith with a respect for good taste, good breeding, for elegance and restraint - qualities rarely to be found to the same degree in free-thinkers of the day (Les Salon litt., pp. 180-187). One consequence of this was that gaming was frowned upon at the Hôtel de Nevers, even on Wednesdays, and certainly on Tuesdays, which were devoted to refined conversation on intellectual subjects. Some twenty years later Deslandes was to scorn those salons "où il n'est ordinairement question de rien, où l'on parle sans penser, où l'on mange & l'on joue sans s'appercevoir qu'il faut quelquefois réfléchir"(H.c., II, 155-156). The presiding spirit of the Rue de Richelieu could never have been accused of encouraging such things. "Pour le Jeu, c'est un renversement de toutes les bienséances; le Prince y oublie sa dignité, & la femme sa pudeur. Le gros jeu renferme tous les défauts de la société", said the Marquise in her Avis d'une mère à son fils (ed. 1729, p. 68), showing no sympathy at all for the profligacy of contemporary gaming-parties.

The ideal of the Marquise was one that is familiar to readers of Deslandes's writings, l'honnêteté. " Le titre d'honnête-homme est bien au-dessus des titres de la fortune",

she told her son (Avis etc., p. 33). Likewise she informed her daughter: "L'honnêteté...est un des grands liens de la société, & la seule qualité qui mette de la sureté & de la douceur dans le commerce" (ibid, p. 184). To promote this ideal, she believed in the cult of human nature; in a reasonable code of good manners and some restraint in the search for pleasure. She was certainly devoted to a sort of lay morality. Indeed, Du Bled describes her as independent of all religious sects and philosophic movements (La Soc. fr. etc., V, 193), and refers to a "sorte d'éclectisme spiritualiste, un déisme presque affranchi des dogmes et des symboles positifs". A few pages later, speaking of the Traité de la vieillesse, he draws attention to the doctrine that moral progress consists in the proper cultivation of three things: conversation, retreat and reading (ibid, V, 200). As we have noted, these things are prominent in the Art de ne point s'ennuyer also.

Voluptuaries like Chaulieu were certainly received; but it was understood that they would not expect to behave at the Hôtel de Nevers as they did either at the Cour de Sceaux or the Temple. Fontenelle frequented all three circles, managing to adapt himself to the full-blooded frolics of the Temple; to the circle of Madame du Maine, with its gay recreation and its bergeries; and to the circle of the Marquise de Lambert, with its higher level of elegance and good taste. Thanks to the views of Fontenelle, of La Motte and of the Marquise herself, the Hôtel became the rendezvous of partisans of the "Moderns" in literature. This aspect of the ideology of this group is one that leads us directly to Deslandes's book. It was natural, for instance, that the young author who, on the 21st of July 1717, sent his compliments to Fontenelle and Terrasson (Arch. Ac. Sc., dossier: Desl.) and who is described in Boyer's Preface to the English translation of the Réflexions as a friend of Fontenelle, should have expressed his views upon the old controversy that he recently been revived. Already, in the Réflexions, Deslandes had made a contrast between the "Anciens", who "n'avoient aucune

teinture de la vraie politesse" and the "Moderns" who had (op. cit. pp.49-50). The Art de ne point s'ennuyer provides more significant evidence, however, since its publication occurred right in the middle of the querelle d'Homère, which raged with great violence between 1714 and 1716, as the following dates reveal:

1714 La Motte, Discours sur Homère
1714 De Pons, Lettre sur l'Iliade
1714 Mme. Dacier, Des causes de la corruption du goût
1714 Fénelon, Lettre à l'Académie
1715 Terrasson, Dissertation sur Homère
1715 D'Aubignac, Conjectures académiques
1716- reconciliation between the chief protagonists, La Motte and Mme. Dacier

By 1715, "Modernism" was increasingly certain of victory in the struggle which had been joined in France about 1688, and which (as Swift's Battle of the Books of 1704 shows) had had repercussions in England before flaring up once more in France. Deslandes is quite certain about his own position; for, having alluded to these scavans de profession who deal the death-blow to light conversation, he proceeds to reprove those who pay blind adoration to the "Ancients" (L'Art. etc., pp. 105-106). In this twelfth chapter he accuses these pedants of suffering from a kind of madness which prevents them from thinking for themselves, and of indulging a cowardly super-stition, allowing them to see but one merit in a book - its antiquity. In taking up this position he was aligning himself with Madame de Lambert and her friends - the people who persuaded Mademoiselle Delaunay to reject a contemporary "Trissotin".[30]

There are several other aspects of the Art de ne point s'ennuyer that suggest the influence of the Hôtel de Nevers. First and foremost, there is the insistence upon good taste. The Journal littéraire of 1716 tells us: " Il paroît que l' Auteur de ce Livre l'a particulièrement fait pour consoler une Dame devenue la proie d'un Mari jaloux & bizarre...& exilée au fond d'une Province grossière, où l'Esprit passe pour un Monstre..." (T. VIII, p. 236). This is true; but the journalist does not mention the wider aim of appealing to persons of the best breeding and nicest judgement (Pref.).

This appeal is strongly made in the twelfth chapter, in which the author urges his reader always to seek the attention and approbation of polite members of society. This, indeed, is the tone of the work: elegance and polish above everything else. For instance, beginning the second chapter with an argument to the effect that refinement consists in good taste, and that grossness and boorish simplicity offend people of culture, Deslandes (probably with memories of London playhouses still in his mind) disdains the dramatic buffooneries that please the rabble. As we have said: the standards of the best Parisian society are constantly before him. How much solace was afforded to the lady to whom the work is addressed is a matter for conjecture; but it would hardly make her exile more tolerable to read such eulogies of a capital city, which (according to Saint Evremond, to whom he refers) politeness had rendered the most amiable abode in the world (p. 68); or to learn from the Epître that the formality of provincial society makes for nothing but an insipid form of courteousness. Small consolation for one condemned to live in the provinces!

The aim, as we have said, is wider. In what does good taste consist? Not in mere knowledge, but in the ability to feel: " Le véritable bonheur se trouve dans les sentimens..."(p. 140). Passions are vital; but passions must be restrained. For example, just as Madame de Lambert maintained in her Avis à sa fille that "l'habitude aux plaisirs les fait disparoître" (pp. 104-105) and counselled: "il faut donc ménager ses goûts" (p. 128), so Deslandes remarks in 1715: " les plaisirs ne veulent être achetés que par des souhaits vifs & ardens" (L'Art., pp. 89-90), and warns: "On ne peut trop s'écouter ni trop se craindre...On ne se donne point de nouveaux goûts. L'homme habile s'efforce de conserver ceux qu'il a reçus de la nature" (ibid, p. 86). Again, just as Madame de Lambert advises her daughter to control her imagination in order to achieve the maximum happiness (Avis, p. 152), Deslandes tells his reader: "il faut

que l'imagination tienne la mesure" (p. 107). And, when the Marquise quotes: "La temperance...est la meilleure ouvrière de la volupté, and adds: "une lecture, un ouvrage, une conversation, font sentir une joie plus pure que l'appareil des plus grands plaisirs" (p. 130), we recognize ideas that span our author's first two prose writings.

These ideas were for the cultured minority. So were those of les précieux; and here again there is a link between Deslandes and the circle of Madame de Lambert, which was essentially a feminist group, in the same way as the Temple Society was devoted to masculine pleasures. "...les femmes sont destinées à plaire; mais il faut bien plus penser à se donner un mérite solide...", says the Marquise (Avis à sa fille, p. 120). The tone and the aesthetic standard of the Hôtel de Nevers was determined by this principle, which is illustrated in the prevalence of the cult of delicacy, the exclusion of gambling and the stress upon refined conversation. It was "precious" in its disdain of pedantry and in the exaltation of "Modernism" (vid. Adam, "Baroque et Préciosité", RSH, Juill.-Déc. 1949, pp. 209-213). It was "precious" in its preference for works written to give pleasure - to please the small cultured public. In Deslandes's book pedantry is an aesthetic vice and an offence against common sense: "Pour moi, je souhaiterois qu'on immole au bon sens les Auteurs qui ensevelissent leurs pensées sous un amas prodigieux de passages..." (p. 117); and, since "l'érudition seule est fade & stupide" (p. 106), he admires those who write to please and those who "feel" what they write. Now, it is significant that the art of writing to please is illustrated at one point by reference to Voiture, and that, in another passage, he extols the "becoming grace" to Mademoiselle de Scudéry.

Of gallantry too he is openly enamoured. For instance, he expresses satisfaction that Ovid did not follow the legal profession, which would have unfitted him for writing of the delicate art. In the opening sentences of the sixteenth chapter he regrets that gallantry is sometimes insincere,

but claims that, having recognized this, he can assert his own good faith in praising the refined members of the opposite sex. "Vous sçavez quelle sorte de politesse est nécessaire avec les femmes", wrote Madame de Lambert. "A present il semble que les jeunes gens se soient permis d'y manquer...mais ils ont beau faire, ils n'ôteront point aux femmes la gloire d'avoir formé ce que nous avons eu de plus honnêtes-gens dans le tems passé. C'est à elles qu'on doit la douceur des moeurs, la délicatesse des sentimens, & cette figne [sic] galanterie de l'esprit & des manieres" (Avis, pp. 58-59). All these qualities are implicit in Deslandes's praise of gallantry, which he practises himself in a poem in the Poésies diverses:

Un esprit fin, un modeste enjoûment,
Un visage plein d'agrément,
Tout m'autorise à lui rendre mes armes,
Et tout conspire à m'enflamer.
Jugez de son rare mérite,
Puisque l'Amour ose l'aimer.

. . . . . .

Ah! qu'il faut être aimable,
Charmante Brisambour,
Pour se faire aimer de l'Amour.
Ce Dieu si fier, si redoutable
Cede à l'éclat de vos beaux yeux:
Son goût & sa délicatesse
Brillent dans sa tendresse.
Que votre sort est glorieux! (in Réflex., ed. 1732, pp 139-140)

We have touched upon the crucial influence of Fontenelle, which we must now investigate more thoroughly. It is revealed in three aspects of the Art de ne point s'ennuyer: first, in the author's judgement of mankind in general; secondly, in his conception of the pastoral; thirdly, in his attitude to sentiments and passions.

"Nous sommes tous fous; la folie des uns est plus bouillante, & celle des autres plus tranquille", said Deslandes in the Réflexions (p. 4). This is pure Fontenelle, and it naturally re-appears in 1715. In the first pages of the second prose work, we are told: "Tous les Siècles se ressemblent, & le monde n'est point différent aujourd'hui de ce qu'il étoit dans sa plus grande jeunesse....l'esprit &

le coeur de l'homme ne changent jamais" (p. 3). Between the two statements separated here by points of suspension he makes it clear that he is alluding to the follies and vanities of mankind. Again, in a later passage in which he deals with authors who write to please their readers, he claims a predilection for those who disclose (and even ape) the absurdities of their fellows: "j'aime enfin ceux qui me découvrent sans aigreur les sottises des hommes & qui s'attachent à les copier" (p. 118). He adds that the advantages of reading such works are that we find in them "idées riantes" and a scrupulousness of detail which avoids pedantry, because it is seasoned with "art & gaîté". But the crucial words in the phrase we quoted above are "sans aigreur"; for the follies of mankind should not be derided with acrimony, but acknowledged with tolerance and good humour, because they are so universal. That is Deslandes's view of human nature in his early writings. It is also the stand-point of Fontenelle, which Carré describes in several passages of his study, La Philosophie de Fontenelle, ou le sourire de la raison. "Nous ne savons guère ce que sont les hommes, parce que nous vivons au milieu d'eux...(op. cit., p. 41). We therefore suppose a Dialogue between those who have entered the Hereafter, and who can consequently view things in a detached manner. What is the result? "Le trait qui crève les yeux, mais il faut les ouvrir...c'est la folie universelle..." (ibid). It is the folly of conquest, or destruction, or ambition. It is the folly of vanity, or of accepting prodigies without examining their origins and causes. Moral philosophy is foolish because it thinks it can dam up human passions: natural philosophy is likewise stupid because it tries to explain the complexity of the world. "Avec la folie, la chose du monde la mieux partagée est la sottise...", says Carré: "Folie et sottise, puissance des forces troubles de la passion, incertitudes des lumières vacillantes de la raison, tel est l'homme tout entier, et la vision générale de l'homme n'a point varié chez Fontenelle" (p. 49).[31] Nor does it vary perceptibly in the writings of Deslandes, who depicts human

folly as vividly in La Fortune (1751) as he does in the Art de ne point s'ennuyer.

Such a view of mankind encourages a sensitive person to seek some mental escape from reality. This imaginative evasion led Deslandes into a traditional world of fancy, remote from the follies of men and from the rationalizing of that section of mankind referred to as "les sçavans de profession". In a poem to "Madame de M***" (to whom the Art de ne point s'ennuyer is also dedicated), Deslandes speaks of a monastery on the isle of Cythera, where the goddess Venus holds court:

> Là demeurent charmans Plaisirs,
> Jeux badins, gracieux Desirs.
> Là jamais ne parut Tristesse,
> Mais bien douce & saine Allegresse,
> Qui de sa gentille maison
> Pour jamais chassa la Raison,
> Monstre cruel, dont la manie
> S'oppose au repos de la vie,
> Là delivre de soins jaloux,
> L'Amant s'exerce en l'Art de plaire
> Et ne sent de bonheur plus doux,
> Que de vivre avec sa Bergere. (in Réflex, ed. 1732, p.141)

Thus, in this Watteauesque piece of verse, sober reasoning is once more found incompatible with the art of appealing to a member of the "fair sex" - this time a 'shepherdess". Deslandes could not fail to be interested in the pastoral conceit that was so much in evidence in contemporary poetry and painting. To his master, Fontenelle, he openly acknowledges his indebtedness in the sixth chapter of his work of 1715, where he praises the ingenious idleness, the amorous nothings and the simple delights of the Arcadian shepherd. Indeed, he claims that it is the peace of this imaginary countryside that has assisted the cult of gallantry. As we have seen, our author insists upon sincerity in that cult. Such sincerity he finds in Vergil's Georgics, as well as in the writings of Tasso, Guarini and D'Urfé; and he adds the warning that coquetry and prudence must walk hand in hand, if the pastoral is to treated in a tasteful manner (pp. 55-57). Thus gallantry, the pastoral and the cultivation of refinement are closely linked, as they had been in the writings of Fontenelle about the year 1688. For it was aesthetic, rather

than ethical restraint that transformed baser desires into what Jacques Vergier wittily refers to in 1718 as "la volupté vertueuse" and "la vertu voluptueuse":

> Je sens que tout mon coeur vole,
> Plus enflammé de désirs
> Que n'est le Berger qui vole
> Un baiser, tendre larcin,
> Sur le blanc & ferme sein,
> Ou sur la bouche vermeille
> De sa Belle qui sommeille
> . . . . . .
> Là, dans un juste milieu,
> La vertu volupteuse,
> La volupté vertueuse
> Ne se séparent jamais. (Epitre au Duc de Noailles, Oeuvres, ed. 1780, III, 73)

There is something exquisitely restful about such lines. Indeed the prime necessity of the pastoral was a temporary retreat from the world of men and affairs. Mindful of the title of his Latin verses published two years before, the author of the Art de ne point s'ennuyer stresses the value of a mental withdrawal to what the Journal littéraire of 1716 calls "une certaine Oisiveté agréable, qu'on regarde comme le Souverain Bonheur..." (VIII, 237). Physical retreat is not necessarily desirable. In fact rusticity is despised in Deslandes's book (Ch. VII), the author constantly urging retirement into freedom and simplicity, which, in some ways, are best sought away from the boorishness of peasants. In short, it is better to turn the pages of Sannazaro, Vergil or Theocritus than to contemplate churlish countrymen. It is an idealized picture, and must remain so if it is not to be effaced by reality. At Sceaux, when the celebrated fêtes (so reminiscent of the ballets de cour) were in progress, the bergeries were acted by the Duchesse du Maine herself, assisted by the Marquis de Saint-Aulaire, by M. de Malezieu and others. Elegance was thus combined with pastoralism - a delightful illusion, a fairy-tale play, acted by the Quality. These refined people who played the pastoral had no desire whatever to live exactly like real shepherds, any more than, in the second half of the century, their natural heirs who doted on the noble savage, had the remotest notion of journeying to Tahiti to verify the fact that he

really existed. They were much too busy practising what Madame de Lambert called "la retraite de l'ame" (Avis, p. 79). Fontenelle makes the point abundantly clear in his Discours sur la nature de l'éclogue. Pastoral poetry, he says, is an ideal and a tradition, maintained throughout the ages not by discussions about sheep or goats, but by the idea of tranquillity:

> Je conçois donc que la poésie pastorale n'a pas de grands charmes, si elle est aussi grossiere que le naturel, ou si elle ne roule précisément que sur les choses de la campagne. Entendre parler de brebis & de chèvres, des soins qu'il faut prendre de ces animaux, cela n'a rien par soi-même qui puisse plaire: ce qui plaît, c'est l'idée de tranquillité attachée à la vie de ceux qui prennent soin des brebis & des chèvres (Oeuv., ed. 1764, IV, 94).

It is moreover an antidote to the tedious spectacle of human ambition, destructive of that gentle idleness which promotes physical and mental well-being: "L'ambition, parce qu'elle est trop contraire à cette paresse naturelle, n'est ni une passion générale, ni une passion fort délicieuse" (ibid, p. 95). In Arcady love rules supreme:

> Il n'est que trop certain d'ailleurs, que l'amour est de toutes les passions la plus générale & la plus agréable. Ainsi dans l'état que nous venons de décrire, il se fait un accord des deux fortes passions de l'homme, de la paresse & de l'amour...Un amour plus simple, parce qu'on n'a pas l'esprit si dangereusement raffiné...(ibid, p. 96).

It is just remotely conceivable that love and idleness might be cultivated elsewhere but in the country, but, since the alternative appears to be an urban setting, the poet is naturally obliged to choose the woods and fields:

> Si l'on pouvoit placer ailleurs qu'à la campagne la scene d'une vie tranquille & occupée seulement par l'amour, de sorte qu'il n'y entrât ni chevres, ni brebis, je ne crois pas que cela en fût plus mal: les chevres & les brebis ne servent de rien; mais comme il faut choisir entre la campagne & les villes, il est plus vraisemblable que cette scene soit à la campagne (ibid, pp. 96-97).

We must not forget, therefore, that those who live on the banks of the Lignon are fictitious characters, and we must not strip them of natural refinements essential to imaginary swains: consequently Fontenelle counsels the would-be poet: "Ce n'est pas qu'on ne doive mettre de la simplicité & de la naïveté jusques dans les sentimens; mais on doit prendre

garde aussi que cette naïveté & cette simplicité n'excluent que les raffinements excessifs..." (ibid, p. 112). Thus, in Fontenelle's definition of the pastoral we are brought back to the same principles of elegance, refinement, "Nature" and sentiment that we have found in the Art de ne point s'ennuyer. Carré sums up Fontenelle's achievements in the realm of the pastoral in these words:

> Fontenelle, l'esprit le plus positif et le plus moderne, le mondain le plus incorrigible, s'est évadé d'une existence très artificielle, pour vivre une vie plus artificielle encore dans le pays de bergerie, et trouver là, par miracle, l'occasion d'une entière sincérité, dépourvue d'artifices (Font. etc. p. 589).

We believe that Deslandes too had learned this paradoxical secret - that he loved society so much that he wished to teach it the value of retreat from society.

It is not surprising, therefore, that he should share Fontenelle's view of sentiments and passions. In one of Deslandes's many tributes to the ladies, he speaks of the passions that bubble to the surface in their conversation. To change the metaphor: he provides an analogy in the prospect of a fine garden ordered by Nature alone, and which is actually more pleasing than flower-beds laid out in geometrical designs. Having less regard for logic, he adds, women tend to ramble in their talk according to the dictates of the heart. This he considers an excellent and delightful characteristic in the female. And, since (as he tells us at the end of his essay) true simplicity lies in the sentiments, men would do well to imitate women by conserving those tastes they receive from nature and by consulting the heart rather than the head. In his treatise of 1656 Sur les plaisirs, Saint Evremond had declared to D'Olonne: "Pour vivre heureux, il faut faire peu de réflexions sur la vie..." (Oeuv., ed. 1927, I, 15): "Les sentimens établissent un bonheur que ruinent les pensées" chimes the young author who had recently met Saint Evremond's editors and biographers in London (L'Art etc., p. 137). It is the anti-intellectualism of the restrained hedonist, who realizes that, if we are to be happy, we must learn, or re-learn the proper value of feelings. Indeed, only thus can

tedium be succesefully chased away. "On ne peut trop s'écouter ni trop se craindre..." (p. 86): we must know ouselves - our own passionate nature - before we can be contented.

In the writings of Fontenelle, Carré finds an antidote to human folly in greater mental suppleness, in submission to Nature, in an enlightened reason conquering itself, in recognition that fundamental human passions are the motive force of life and are the most constant power within the human mechanism (op. cit., p. 51). For this reason, he adds, the passions are to be prized above intellect, often inefficacious and hampered by uncertainty. Nature has arranged matters thus: not wishing man to consider things clearly and calmly, she weaves a web of consoling illusions to assist in facing life. Cold reason dispels these illusions. Unless it is its own master, reflection can be a mortal poison; but passions and folly have a vital part to play by virtue of their social utility (ibid, p. 60). There is hardly an idea here that is not to be found in Deslandes's work of 1715 - the positive value of passions and sentiments; the danger inherent in excessive reflection and rationalism; the acceptance of folly and of its potentialities for psychological good; above all, the need to study human nature and of discovering what is necessary to happiness. " Les passions font nos folies, les passions font de grandes choses; la raison n'est pas inoffensive, il ne faut pas sans prudence la substituer aux passions", says Carré, interpreting the ideas of Fontenelle (op. cit., p. 250). No better summing up of Deslandes's view of the passions could be found. True happiness is to be found in the sentiments rather than in the intellect. for the heart knows a simplicity untouched by the hand of civilization and consisting of what Madame de Lambert calls "les graces du coeur & des sentimens" (Avis etc., p. 121). This simplicity does not consist so much in innocence as in a certain way of looking at the world and at life. Furthermore it is truly satisfying, because it lives up to its promise.

The sentiments to which he refers so often are not, as might be expected, primitive and natural. At the end of the treatise we come to the full meaning of the title: "Pour bien sentir, il faut rejeter toutes les passions qui viennent de la nature & en faire d'autres sur leur modèle" (p.141). The art of dispelling boredom is the art of feeling, assisted by retreat, by restrained voluptuousness,[33] by elegance and refinement which transform the passions received from Nature. The apparent contradiction between "art" and "Nature" is thus resolved. Nature is merely the source of our passions and follies, which we must refine in obedience to an aesthetic standard. It requires an effort to transmute the raw materials which Nature supplies; but it an effort of the heart rather than the head, and this too is "natural".

The Art de ne point s'ennuyer owes much to the salons at the close of the reign of Louis XIV, and especially (we suspect) to the Hôtel de Nevers. Indeed, although it is addressed to one unfortunate lady, it is clearly written for the wider (though still limited) salon-public. It owes almost as much to the dominant social and intellectual figure, Fontenelle. It is not profound. Fontenelle himself was hardly that. But there is much good sense in its conclusions; and, through what the journalist considers to be obscurities arising out of an addiction to "preciosity", the Journal littéraire of 1716 sees some solid merit in the book: "nous reconnoissons qu'entre diverses choses, que notre peu de pénétration ne nous a pas permis d'entendre, il y en a diverses autres fort bonnes & fort sensées" (VIII, 237).

We must add a post-script. After he ceased to reside in the capital, Deslandes moved away from the salons and from their immediate influence. Yet, of that influence something remained. As late as 1749, when Deslandes published his Histoire de la Princesse de Montferrat, he paid a significant tribute. First (as Madame de Lambert had done so

often) he considered what was wrong with the contemporary methods of educating women: "on ne leur inspire que le goût du frivole, de l'agréable, des plaisirs qui amollissent le coeur..." (op. cit.,p. 9). The defect in question he judged to be a basic cause of the decadence of society, since a misguided conception of feminine education contributed to the current craze for luxury. The solution was clear: France had urgent need of that feminism traditionally associated with "pre-ciosity":

> C'est aux femmes à secouer un joug si importun, & par une conduite prudente & circonspecte, à se faire rendre la justice qui leur est dûe. Qu'elles commencent par se distinguer elles-mêmes...qu'enfin elles assurent leur réputation en regardant les plaisirs comme des passages qui doivent rarement, & peu les arrêter; la vertu est la demeure fixe, où elles sont continuellement rappelées par leur intérêt (ibid, p. 10).

This is the judgement of a maturer Deslandes, who has long ceased to extol pleasures for their own sake. But his mind is carried back some thirty years or more to the days when he -- probably knew and admired "une femme d'esprit" (as he now calls her), who was the embodiment and epitome of the virtues he has just claimed to be necessary to the welfare of his contemporaries. It is significant that the name that presents itself to the author at this point is that of Madame de Lambert.

c) Some General Inferences

There is a common basis of ideas between the two prose works we have just studied. The three writers to whom the author pays most specific tribute are Montaigne, Gassendi and Fontenelle. In Montaigne he appreciates the moderate cult of natural appetites; the resignation to afflictions and to death itself; the imaginative and psychological insight into human nature, achieved without artificiality or pedantry; and the preference for the moralists of Antiquity. More immediate influences are more important, however. We suspect that he knew Gassendism at second hand, through the intermediary of the Epicureans of his own day, from whom

he almost certainly received accounts of the private scepticism of the théologal de Digne; and, if he presumes to find in "Gassendism" the tendency to mock death, at least he is justified in attributing to Gassendi and his Greek master the ethical foundation of his thesis. Thirdly, from personal contact with Fontenelle he gains more than possible access to the salons: it is from the thinker who shares with Bayle the title of "father of the philosophes" that Deslandes derives a basic view of mankind, and particularly of human folly and human passions.

"Let us despise life, when it appears most agreeable", urges the author of the Réflexions; "and, as death approaches,--let us continue to extract from life the maximum enjoyment". "Let us beware of crude natural passions, and create new sentiments upon the model of these passions. Let us maintain the pleasure that arises from ardent desire, by refusing to satisfy it too quickly" - that is the art of dispelling ennui. The two complement each other. Both pay tribute to the pastoral, though admittedly the Réflexions make but a passing reference to it (p. 9). Both prefer to regard life as a comedy acted upon the stage (Réflex., pp. 11-12; L'Art, pp. 1-2). Both uphold the "Moderns" at the expense of the "Ancients" (vid. Réflex., pp. 49-50). Both show distaste for the austere philosophies of old (Réflex., p. 94; L'Art, p. 9). Both preach good taste (vid. Réflex., p. 13); both show the inadequacy of reason and decry pedantry (vid. Réflex., pp. 5-6). In both, moreover, we learn a technique of restrained pleasure-seeking. This "hedonistic Stoicism" is clearly a doctrine for the salons, having this in common with "preciosity" that it is necessarily exclusive. For the majority of men and women would never be able to understand how delicacy can be pleasurable, or how joking at death's door can be "gracieux & divertissant" (Réflex., p. 2).

Thus, in the Réflexions, he declares that it is useless to address "philosophy" to any but the unprejudiced and unconventional (pp. 20-21); and he judges the plebs in the

following harsh terms:

Superstitieux, inapliqué, peu capable d'examen, le Peuple se laisse aisément séduire. Sa folle avidité pour le merveilleux ou pour l'incroïable, lui fait souvent rechercher le faux. La vérité nuë & dépouillée de ses ornemens flateurs qui surprennent l'imagination, le fatigue: quelquefois même elle l'ennuie... L'incrédulité...Amie de la Raison,...n'est point soumise à ces passions fines & ingenieuses que la politique sçait mettre en oeuvre (pp. 87-88).

And - as if to reinforce the message by insisting on the danger of revealing too much to too many people - he writes: "C'est quelquefois le plus grand des malheurs que de penser, & sur-tout de parler autrement que le vulgaire: l'ignorance qui ne sauroit souffrir les personnes rares, se tourne en jalousie, & la jalousie quand elle manque de veritables accusations pour perdre quelqu'un, en invente" (p. 114). Consequently, since the prudent man of letters is well aware of these perils, "Rien n'est plus burlesque que de s'imaginer que l'homme écrit toûjours suivant ce qu'il pense, & pense toujours suivant ce qu'il écrit" (p. 94). It was Montaigne who wrote; "Mon humeur n'est propre, non plus à parler qu'à escrire, pour les principians [ignorant beginners] ", and who said: "aller prescher le premier passant et regenter l'ignorance ou ineptie du premier rencontré, c'est un usage auquel je veux grand mal" (Ess., ed. Villey, III, 205). In Bernier's Abrégé de la philosophie de Gassendi (VII, 670), we come upon such sentiments as these: "...pour reprimer les Peuples, & les contenir dans le devoir, il est de la derniere importance de leur bien persuader qu'il [sic] sont Libres...". "Contentons-nous d'être un [sic] petite troupe choisie..., & ne divulguons pas nos mysteres dans le peuple", writes the author of the Pluralité des mondes (Font. Oeuv.,ed. 1764, II, 100). This warning, issued to a lady who has had difficulty in persuading two male visitors that there is life on other planets, is not overlooked by Deslandes, who realizes the absolute necessity of distinguishing himself from a much larger "troop", "une troupe de visionnaires qui courent après des chimères", as he calls it in the Réflexions (p. 12). Three years later our author is equally aware that the possession of fine taste

puts barriers between the refined minority and the rabble; and he is content that it should be so.

We must not forget the deliberate exclusiveness of his early doctrines. We must also bear in mind that, with good taste, he probably acquired from the circles and salons the frame-work of an eclectic deism that he was to build upon in his mature writings.

PART II NOTES

1. All refs. to 1732 ed., Amst. Westeing. In the title there is a suggestion of the influence of Naudé's Apologie pour tous les grands personnages qui ont été faussement soupçonnés de magie, 1679, which was re-published in the same year as the Ist ed. of the Réflexions.

2. In more sober mood, Desl. returns to this theme in 1737 (H.c., II, 367): "Cette indifférence pour la vie & pour la mort, si noblement exprimée dans les Ouvrages des Anciens, a été la source de tant d'actions extraordinaires qu'ils ont faites, & que nous admirons encore, sans les pouvoir trop imiter".

3. v. Pt. I, n. 31 of our study.

4. "Caton traita la mort comme une affaire trop sérieuse; mais pour moi, vous voyez que je badinai avec elle, & c'est en quoi je prétends que ma philosophie alla bien plus loin que celle de Caton. Il n'est pas si difficile de braver fiérement la mort, que d'en railler nonchalamment...Qu'un autre meure tout doucement & se trouve en état de faire des tours badins sur sa mort, c'est plus que ce qu'a fait Caton..." (Font., Oeuvres, ed. 1764, I, 38). A few pages later we come upon this theory of the social value of folly: "Les folies de tous les hommes étant de même nature, elles se sont si aisément ajustées ensemble, qu'elles ont servi à faire les plus forts liens de la société humaine..." (ibid, p. 58).

5. Paganism emerges so often in this work that it would be impossible to trace all the pagan notions without giving a complete résumé of the text. Attention should, however, be drawn to the completely pagan judgement on the manner of Petronius' death (p. 26); and we should bear in mind that it is also pagan and libertine to assert that meeting death soberly and with contrition is a matter of prejudice and convention (pp. 20-21).

6. This is the article to which La Monnoye refers in 1716 (v. Pt. I, n. 30 of present work), claiming that the Jesuit journalists were perhaps well aware of the author's identity. "Nous aurions négligé ce libelle impie, si nous ne sçavions que les libertins triomphent sur le silence qu'on garde en de semblables occasions...", say the Jesuits (p. 410). We wonder, therefore, if the critique of ideas was not something of a formality, and whether (since the Réflexions were not put on the Index until after the author's death) the former pupil of the Order did not have some secret "cover" for this book which, as the translator of the 1745 English ed. points out, "was printed publickly at Rochefort, a Town near Rochelle, in 1714, during the reign of Lewis XIV, a Prince who, in his latter Days especially, permitted no Liberties injurious to Religion" (Tr. Pr. p. vii). The literary judgement of the journalists of Trévoux is more severe and perhaps more sincere: "...il parle plus juste, quand il définit son livre un mélange de sérieux & de badinage; car on n'y apperçoit, ni érudition, ni critique... il auroit mieux employé son tems à chasser ou à joüer, qu'à chercher le moyen de plaisanter en mourant" (pp. 411-412).

7. The same writer (pp. 90-91) also suggests that La Mettrie's death as a result of devouring a whole pâté aux truffes, may have been indirectly caused by ideas in Desl.'s Réflexions, tr. into German in 1747, at a time when "the euthanasia of the Atheists was a much-debated question"!

8. In 1737, the apology for suicide is ostensibly retracted. Comparing the wide-spread desire for suicide that followed the teachings of Hegesias with Hindu suttee and the decision of Milanese maidens to adopt a convent life in response to appeals of St. Ambrose, he sums up the results of these "enthusiasms"

with the words "singularités...excès...désordres"; and the thesis that death is the greatest of blessings is dismissed as "un paradoxe...révoltant" (H.c., II, 176-178).

9. The Engl. tr. of 1713 also adds a long quotation from Montaigne's Essais (Livre II, ch. III, ed. 1922, II, 26-28), beginning "Philip being forcibly entered into Peloponnesus..." and ending "...cut to pieces". This is not however to be found in the eds. of 1714 or 1732.

10. The same ed. of La Bruyère (App. p. 428) gives the note: "Il existe, dit Walckenaer (Remarques etc. p. 751), un petit ouvrage de Deslandes, sur les Grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant, auquel La Bruyère fait probablement allusion dans ce caractère /Des Esprits Forts/". Surely a masterly anachronism to suggest that La Bruyère's remarks on D'Olonne reflect the influence of Deslandes!

11. In the Encyclopédie (art. Epicuréisme), Diderot appears eager to defend the Epicureans against the charge of immorality. He shows how "natural" is the maligned system which promotes the happiness that all desire; and, after retailing plans for the cultivation of volunté and virtue and for banishing the fear of death, he says: "Voilà les points fondamentaux de la doctrine d'Epicure, le seul d'entre tous les Philosophes anciens qui ait sû concilier sa morale avec ce qu'il pouvoit prendre pour le vrai bonheur de l'homme, & ses préceptes avec les appétits & les besoins de la nature; aussi a-t-il eu & aura-t-il, dans tous les tems un grand nombre de disciples. On se fait stoïcien, mais on naît épicurien".

12. If Gassendi is hardly mentioned in the Histoire critique, his precursor, Lorenzo Valla is certainly presented to us. Valla revived the philosophy of Epicurus, and "par un excès de prudence, avoit employé tous les ménagemens convenables pour faire passer la doctrine d'Epicure, & la rendre homogene au Christianisme". Here is a first point of similarity with Gassendi. "Il vouloit que la volupté fut vertueuse...c'est à dire qu'elle ne fut point accompagnée de débauche ni suivie de remords, ensorte qu'un honnête homme put observer toutes les loix de la société, tous les devoirs de son état." That could also be said of the seventeenth-century thinker. Moreover, the highly sympathetic presentation of Valla's opinions is a sign of his continuing regard for the hero of the Réflexions of 1712 (H.c., IV, 116-118).

13. For instance, he prefaces La Fortune (1751) with a quotation from Pliny found on p. 629 of vol. VII of the Abrégé, and much of the material of his Lettre préliminaire to that work is to be found in Bk. III, Ch. II of Bernier.

14. Nevertheless, Raynal (Corr. litt., I, 127-128) does not find that the subject is treated with the lightness of touch it demands: "Cet ouvrage devait partir d'un esprit aisé, d'une plume légère, d'une humeur gaie, et M. Deslandes est l'antipode de tout cela". Certainly humour and facetiousness were not the author's forte, and, after 1712-1717, he rarely strained after such effects again.

15. "C'est vers 1706 que Châteauneuf introduisait son protégé dans la société du Temple...Arouet ne pouvait se montrer au Temple que les jours de congé et durant les vacances..." (Desn. Volt. et la soc. &c., I, 39-40). Deslandes may also have been taken along during his "free" days; but, as with Voltaire, regular contact presumably came after schooldays were behind him.

16. In 1737, discussing Epicurean philosophy and ethics, he remarks that, since man cannot always follow the good and avoid evil, "la raison l'oblige de souffrir avec fermeté ce qui lui

est indispensablement nuisible & contraire..." (H.c., II, 349). v. La Mettrie (Syst. d'Epicure, in Oeuv. phil., ed. 1752, p. 54): "Tels sont mes Projets de vie & de mort; dans le cours de l'une & jusqu'au dernier soupir, Epicurien voluptueux; Stoïcien ferme, aux approches de l'autre".

17. "...elle me laissa deux mille francs. J'étais enfant; j'avais fait quelques mauvais vers qu'on disait bons pour mon âge. L'Abbé de Châteauneuf...m'avait mené chez elle, et je lui avais plu je ne sais comment..." (Volt., Oeuv., ed. Mol., XXXVII, 408).

18. His interest in libertines and Epicureans emerges from refs. in the Réflexions, L'Art de ne point s'ennuyer, Le Nouveau Voyage &c. ; Epicurus, Aristippus, Gassendi, Molière, Chapelle, De-Blot, La Rochefoucauld, Mme. Deshoulières, Grammont, St. Réal, Ninon de Lenclos, Des Yvetaux, Fontenelle, St. Evremond, Mme. de Mazarin, Hobbes and William Temple. Many of these are mentioned more than once.

19. v. Pt I of this study, n. 25. Desn., Volt. et la soc. &c., I, 101: "Sceaux avait une autorité en matière de goût, devant laquelle il n'y avait qu'à s'incliner..."; Perrens, Les Libertinisme en Fr. au XVIIe s., ed. 1899, p. 453: "Sceaux diffère fort du Temple: le plaisir y est plus léger, plus éloigné de l'orgie et tout ensemble de la philosophie; l'impiété n'ose s'y afficher ni se déclarer sur les toits". There is a hint of social connections between the Collège Louis-le-Grand and the Sceaux group: v. Du Cerceau's Epître au Duc du Maine (Rec. de poés. div., ed. 1720, p. 9).

20. Like Sceaux, the Temple was an arbiter of taste in Regency times (Desnoiresterres, op. cit., I, 96,99, & 103). v. our note to Pt. I, n° 25.

21. ed, 1712 and Engl tr. of 1713 had no Poés. div.. The 1732 ed. has the same poems as ed. of 1714, but in slightly different order.

22. In 1757 ed. of Chaulieu's works this is attributed to the Abbé himself (II, 132); but the last line quoted reads: "Sans offenser la Bienséance".

23. Rev. univ., Nov.-Dec. 1949, pp. 271-277. Saulnier reproduces the usual biographical errors: b. Pondichery 1690, comm. de la mar. in Rochefort and Brest (inversion of truth), and, having passed swiftly over the major philosophical works as being in the fashion of the times, has this to say of the Réflexions and the Art de ne point s'ennuyer: "Moins remplaçables ...sont les livres d'une dernière sorte, bien caractéristiques d'une forme de philosophie souriante qui s'en allait justement dépérir au milieu du siècle, devant l'âpreté des nouveaux combats, et aussi devant le goût des larmes" (p. 272). Concerning the Rabelaisian poems (one of which, Les Fruits du mariage, as he admits, may not be the work of Deslandes at all), he says: "Sur la poursuite de la légende rabelaisienne, entre Antoine Leroy et Michelet, son témoignage du moins n'est pas sans prix. On l'a méconnu. Il est d'autant moins permis de l'oublier qu'il paraît, ou plutôt reparaît (car des rééditions attestent le succès) au milieu du XVIIIe siècle, à l'heure même où la faveur de Rabelais dans le public lettré semble momentanément pâlir" (ibid). The emphasis is slightly misplaced in this article. Deslandes's claim to our notice does not rest on his early writings alone; and, if we discount the poem to which we have referred above, we are left with but one poetic tribute to Rabelais. Again, the "goût des larmes" did not exclude the possibility of readers being attracted by a book that had acquired a certain notoriety; and those who could see behind the façade of impiety and anti-clericalism, were able to discover in the Réflexions a facet of Gassendism which continued to be interesting precisely because it was more in harmony with the spirit of the Philosophic Movement than was the rationalism

of Descartes. Finally, Saulnier does not make it clear that the "Rabelaisian poems" are but a mere fragment in this volume that was republished several times in the eighteenth century - fragments added with many others to make up space. The Réflexions survived well into the second half of the century for their own sake, and not because of the additional pieces.

24. v. Pt. I of this work, n. 35.

25. The title of this book may possibly have been suggested by the Art de penser of Nicole and Arnaud, mentioned at the beginning of the XXIInd ch. of the Réflex..

26. This precept appears in a part of the Réflex. added to the 1712 ed. during our author's stay in London: "...la politesse de l'esprit est préferable aux connoissances arides & aux recherches épineuses" (ed. 1732, p. 100).

27. He refers to Mme Deshoulières in this connection. The works of this writer do not furnish evidence of specific influence upon Desl., but the pastoral conception of love, the Anachreontic drinking verses, the witty Epîtres, Madrigaux, Epigrammes testify to general influence.

28. v. Pt. I, n. 26 of the present work. Letters in the Arch. of the Ac. des Sc. show our author's acquaintance with Fontenelle and Terrasson, and on p. 2 of Boyer's 1713 tr. of the Réflex., the translator alludes to Fontenelle as "the Author's particular Friend" (foot-note). His acquaintance with Buffier is shown in the first of the Birch MSS letters to Desmaizeaux (Aug. 7 1713) and Buffier also taught at Louis-le-Grand. All these men frequented the salon of Mme de Lambert, as well as Bragelongne to whom the above note refers (v. Perrens, op. cit, p. 465), and about whom we read in the Hist. Ac. Sc., Ann. 1744: "Le respect seul nous empêche de mettre à la tête de tant d'illustres noms /The Cardinal de Polignac, Fontenelle ,Mairan &c/ celui d'une grande Princesse, à la Cour de laquelle Mr. l'Abbé de Bragelongne étoit admis...". Like so many others, then, the Abbé visited both Sceaux and the Hôtel de Nevers.

29. Lacroix (XVIIIe s., Inst. usages &c., ed 1875, p. 437) informs his readers that the Mse. de Lambert "dès l'année 1710, après la mort de son mari, avait signé un bail à vie avec le duc de Nevers et pris possession d'une partie de son vaste hôtel ...", and that she continued to hold her salon in this building until her death in 1733.

30. By 1737, Deslandes's attitude to the dispute of yesterday has evolved in the direction of conciliation; for he can now contemplate Homer without being deterred and irritated by "la prévention & l'amour idolâtre de l'Antiquité" (H.c., I, 305). Regarding distinctions between "Ancients" and "Moderns" as rather absurd, he still holds the view that the chances are that modern authors have improved on their forbears (III, 86), and, looking back in 1756 on the disputes of forty years ago, he finds as reprehensible as "l'idolâtre amour de l'Antiquité" those "disputes non moins animées que vaines & inutiles" that ensued (IV, 75).

31. v. Pt. II, n. 4 of our study re. social value of folly.

32. One lady who might conceivably fit the case is Voltaire's friend, Mme. de Mimeure who, having been "liée avec ce que Paris et la cour comptaient de plus distingué et de plus illustré" (Desnoiresterres, op. cit, I, 261), found herself "exiled" to Auxonne about the time of Deslandes's second prose work -i.e. when her husband, whom she outlived by twenty years, was made governor of that town. Thus she exchanged the pleasures of an "hôtel, situé rue des Saints-Pères" and "ouvert aux artistes et aux gens de lettres, pour lesquels Madame de Mimeure eut toujours un faible" (ibid, pp. 261-262), for the "solitude"

of which Voltaire speaks (Oeuv., XXXIII, 29) and from which she suffered in one of her country houses ("où peut-être vous ennuyez-vous quelquefois", as Voltaire says to her). To this lady, in 1716, Voltaire addressed verses in the pastoral style comparable with the poem we quote here (ibid, XXXIII, 35-36).

33. Fontenelle's influence is to be discerned in Pigmalion (1741). From his Dialogues, Deslandes recommends the maxim that, to be fully appreciated, pleasures should not be tasted too greedily, but skimmed over lightly - as one would skim over a marshland that might engulf the traveller who lingered too long (ed. 1742, pp. 16-17, n (a), and v. pp. 99-100 for Deslandes's use of this doctrine).

PART III

THE EARLY PHILOSOPHY: THE IMPACT OF IDEAS CHIEFLY OF BRITISH ORIGIN

CHAPTER I THE ENGLISH

...nez presque tous avec une profondeur de génie extraordinaire, & un grand amour pour la liberté, ils ont sagement empêché qu'on ne touchât aux anciennes constitutions de l'Etat, qu'on ne leur ravît leurs privileges. Ce sont eux d'ailleurs qui ont le plus contribué au rétablissement des Sciences...il n'y a aucun Royaume en Europe, où l'art de raisonner,..soit plus cultivé qu'en Angleterre (Le Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre, ed. 1717, Préface, p. 228).

The two prose works we have just analysed (and indeed most of the French poems too) betray Parisian influences. Between the dates of their publication Deslandes visited England. This visit has been dealt with from the biographical point of view in the first part of the present work. It is now appropriate to study its profounder effects upon the young writer and thinker. Three aspects of the impact of London will be examined in this part: first, his judgement of the English character and literature - a judgement which connects logically with our chapters devoted to the Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant and the Art de ne point s'ennuyer; secondly, what we presume to be his review of some of the writings of the master of the Charterhouse, Thomas Burnet, in a manuscript which, devoted mainly to the Book of Genesis, echoes some impieties of continental libertines and English freethinkers and anticipates the critical deism of the mature "philosopher"; thirdly, his scientific Newtonianism, which, though undoubtedly a direct consequence of friendships and experiences of the London period,[1] is (like that of Voltaire) partly of continental origin.

a) General Reflections on the English Character

To his private-tutor-friend, the Abbé de la Chapelle,[2] Deslandes sent an epistle in Latin on August 31st, 1712, informing him that he was soon to visit England. This letter, sent from Paris, betrays some modest doubt about his own ability to find favour with the discerning foreigners he was about to meet:

> Visendae enim Angliae tenet me cupiditas
> Quae tibi non improbabitur
> Felicem me, si Anglis acuta nare
> Pollentibus possim placere. (Poetae Rusticantis etc., ed. 1713, pp. 42-43)

On the other hand, the Preface to the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre, composed (in that delightful mixture of prose and Anachreontic verse that we find in some of Voltaire's early works) whilst he was still in England, speaks only of initial enthusiasm at the chance of observing the British scene about which he had heard so much already. Reading the rest of the Nouveau Voyage, we may assume that this Preface, written after first impressions had been sufficiently assimilated, was worded thus to counter any charge of prejudice that might be brought against him later. For on the whole this account of his visit to Britain is critical.

We have noted that Deslandes had become devoted to the Epicurean and Gassendist philosophy; and that his classical education by refined but worldly Jesuits and his contact with aesthetic standards of the salons had bestowed upon him the principles of good taste. These things are very noticeable in 1717.

It is established that during his stay in London he met Desmaizeaux, Boyer and others who remembered Madame de Mazarin, Saint-Evremond and other members of the libertine Epicurean circle of Saint James' Square.[3] As we observed when we examined the article Epicuréisme of the Encyclopédie, this group was closely affiliated to the Temple Society, and in fact represented on foreign soil the tradition of the Gassendists and of the five nieces of Mazarin, to whom the Vendôme brothers were related. Between English and French Epicurean circles there had been much cross-fertilization of ideas, especially of course after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when men like Saint Réal[4] came across with the contingent of refugees. Nor should it be forgotten that Marie-Anne Mancini, Duchesse de Bouillon, to whom Chaulieu addressed several of his poems and who was one of the habitués of the Temple Society, visited her sister in London and

was immediately thereafter forbidden the Court of Versailles. These facts show the liaisons that existed between the Temple and the Saint James coterie of Madame de Mazarin, which Deslandes came to know, as it were, in retrospect. From Frenchmen living in London in 1712-13, Deslandes drew material specifically related to this circle. Consider, for instance, this passage from the Nouveau Voyage:

> Sa maison [i.e. of Mme. de Mazarin] étoit flateuse & polie; les Seigneurs les plus spirituels de la Cour d'Angleterre, s'y trouvoient régulierement chaque jour. Je le dirai, à la honte des societez trop bizarres & trop chagrines, on y voyoit par un mélange heureux
>
> Briller la douce liberté,
> La raison, la vivacité.
> Jamais l'ennuyeuse tristesse
> N'y vint troubler de l'allegresse
> L'aimable & délicat loisir.
> L'esprit seul, l'esprit adorable,
> Rend un bonheur pur & durable;
> Sur ses pas marche le plaisir. (p. 262)

Consider secondly an epigram published in most editions of the Réflexions, and, as a footnote informs us, the expression of "une plaisanterie arrivée à Londres chez feue Madame la Duchesse de Mazarin":

> Dns un fauteuil certain ample Chanoine
> Se reposoit après un long repas.
> Un Juif ardent & brusque comme un Moine
> Lui proposoit maints & maints joyeux cas:
> Parbleu, dit-il, avec votre M***
> Vous nous croïez étourdir diablement.
> L'homme de Dieu se levant en furie,
> Voulut citer le N*** T***
> Pour le N***, ma foi, je le recuse:
> A tel Ouvrage aucun Juif ne s'amuse.
> Hé bien du V*. je fais un cas pareil,
> Répond soudain le Chanoine vermeil:
> Que maintenant Juge habile décide
> En qui des deux git raison plus solide. (Réflex., ed. 1732, p. 138)

Surely, in these extracts from his early writings, it is clear that Deslandes has discovered in London the very image of the Temple Society, culture, wit, vivacity, gaiety and the pursuit of pleasure, allied to impiety and jovial anti-clericalism. But he has found it more as a charming memory than as a reality. Reality is represented by English phlegm, which, by contrast, awakens recollections of the libertine circles he has temporarily left behind in Paris. Consequently, in the course of his book devoted to the English journey,

he returns nostalgically to the Epicureans of the French capital. At the very beginning of the Nouveau Voyage, he recalls the promise made to his friend "l'abbé de B..." in Paris.[5] The circumstances under which the pledge was made are most significant:

> Nous étions cinq buveurs joyeux,
> Autour d'une table cynique,
> Ornez d'un lierre bachique,
> Tous amis, tous voluptueux:
> Quand decoiffant une bouteille,
> Je jurai par le Dieu charmant
> Des plaisirs & de l'enjoûment,
> Que j'aurois soin de vous écrire,
> Deux fois au moins par chaque mois,
> Et de vous faire en secret rire
> En parlant des moeurs des Anglois. (p. 232)

So, moreover, are the phrases he uses to address these deep-drinking Parisian friends seven pages later:

> Vous, qui dans l'aimable molesse
> Puisez vos plus charmans plaisirs,
> Et qui bornez tous vos désirs
> A braver l'austère sagesse... (p. 239)

and, at another point when he is considering British table-manners, he comments with infinite regret:

> Ces petit [sic] soupez de Paris, dont vous connoissez tous les agrémens, ne sont point ici en usage: on ignore les plaisirs qu'une liberté délicate inspire dans ces heures où regne le silence & la tranquillité.
>
> Quand Bacchus ordonne une fête,
> Il choisit la nuit toûjours prête
> A favoriser ses désirs.
> C'est elle qui, vive & coquette,
> Sçait l'art de le mettre en goguette,
> Le jour fait languir les plaisirs. (p. 247)

Similarly, when he continues the same discussion on the succeeding page, he refers to his French friends as "Tendres Buveurs, friands Gourmets,/ Vous, qu'a parez de tous ses traits/ L'aimable & riante jeunesse..." (p. 248); and shortly afterwards draws attention to the different conceptions of "debauch" on the two sides of the Channel:

> Ce ne sont point des chansons polies, ni d'agréables pensées qui amenent ici la débauche...; la délicatesse veut peut-être qu'on oublie sa raison à une table libertine, & qu'on s'abandonne au plaisir, sans trop paroître vouloir s'y abandonner...en France, nous voulons égayer la volupté, & nous craignons sur tout qu'elle ne paroisse trop chagrine (pp. 250-251).

How deeply is he enamoured of the Epicurean way of life; of the petits soupers; of the tables libertines, when he finds

himself amongst these grim British "Alcestes", as he calls them! These observations, in fact, turn his thoughts back to his Greek master:

> Toi, qui jamais de l'imposture
> N'empruntez le masque trompeur,
> Douce Morale d'Epicure,
> Que tu sçais bien flater mon coeur!
> Par toi la fougueuse jeunesse
> Modere ses emportemens:
> Tu prêtes même à la sagesse
> De voluptueux sentimens. (p. 252)

No acknowledgement couldbe more specific than that.

Above all, our former pupil of the humanists of Louis-le-Grand, our avowed Epicurean, had learned to deplore the absence of refinement and good taste in Britain. He noted, for instance, the national proclivity towards brutality and violence, scorning the fights between animals and birds, and the gladiatorial combats which the English regarded as sport; and he observed that a refined taste does not seek pleasures that offend Nature (pp. 242-243). The wider social scene is judged likewise. For instance, in spite of the outspokenness and class-levelling that it encouraged, the London café was compared unfavourably with its more refined French counterpart (pp. 253-254). English women were accounted naturally beautiful, but lamentably ignorant of the best ways of displaying their charms. In truth, there was too much reserve and too little gallantry in the social intercourse between the sexes; and our young French visitor deplored the English woman's extraordinary habit of spending her evenings with her own husband; of appearing disinclined to allow a foreign gentleman accompany her on her afternoon drives, and (still more strange) of yielding so suddenly to an impetuous suitor (pp. 258-261, 246). In making this last observation, Deslandes revealed disappointment that, in love-making, the English did not play the Cytherean game according to the French rules, and that the delightful sport of flirtation - so intriguing to Continentals - was woefully neglected over here. There were, of course, merits in the English character. It was Deslandes who remarked: "...ils joüent une comédie moins gracieuse que les François; mais le fond de leur pièce est

plus conforme à la nature" (p. 239). As the Preface declares, they loved freedom and guarded it jealously; they excelled in reflection;[6] they esteemed and fostered the art of reasoning; they made great progress in mathematics and in natural science. For these qualities and activities, Deslandes judged them an enlightened nation (p. 228).

Surely one of the most striking contrasts with which the French visitor was faced at the end of the reign of Louis XIV was that presented by the religious scene in each land. There were many sects in Britain. But was this kind of religious toleration an unqualified good? Deslandes does not appear to have thought so. For in Britain toleration was extended to such organizations as the Quakers; and, whilst it was intriguing and novel to find a pretty woman holding forth in the meeting-house, the movement as a whole was merely another expression of "enthusiasm". Furthermore, the British had permitted the influx of Protestant refugees from the Cévennes, and thus had imported new forms of fanaticism (pp. 263-264). (Incidentally, these cases are quoted by Deslandes on another occasion: in 1737, in a list of "Christian Cynics" he includes the Quakers and Cévennes Protestants, whom he once more condemns as "fanatics" (Hist. cr. de la ph., II, 192-193).) These sects he was probably glad to be able to condemn, since his book was to be submitted to the censorship of the Abbé Bignon (Birch MSS of B. Mus., 4283, letter of Sept. 14 1713, vº). Yet the sceptic who had already published his Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant could, with full sincerity, condemn the Latitudinarians. For they were "inspirés", and in that above all things differed from the impious hedonists he had known in Paris and the broad-minded deists he came to know in London.

How does this view of British manners and of our national character accord with that of other Continental observers of the time? Bonno provides some useful information on this point. For instance, from Ascoli's study, La Grande Bretagne

devant l'opinion française au XVIIe siècle, he learns that, at the end of the seventeenth century, the composite picture of the "average Englishman" was something like this:

> Au point de vue intellectuel, l'Anglais semble doué d'un esprit réfléchi, pénétrant et pratique, mais dépourvu le plus souvent d'éclat, de fantaisie et de grâce. On admire volontiers la franchise et l'énergie du caractère des insulaires d'outre-Manche, mais on n'est pas sans remarquer qu'il comporte aussi de la dureté et de l'orgueil. Quant aux manières anglaises, elles déconcertent souvent l'opinion française par leur singulier mélange de simplicité et de bizarrerie (La Cult. et la civ. br. devant l'op. fr., 1948, p. 20 A).

What, then, of the period 1700-1717? Bonno mentions the Remarques sur l'Angleterre of G-L Lesage (1715), in which the British were presented as uncouth, brutal, taciturn, lacking in gallantry, enveloped in a kind of sombre melancholy, violent in debauch and dreadfully insular in their outlook. As Bonno remarks, Deslandes does not paint a picture entirely comparable with this; yet the fundamental similarity of judgements is striking:

> Le voyageur [Deslandes] admire la profondeur et le sérieux de l'esprit anglais, la simplicité de manières et la franchise du peuple d'outre-Manche; mais il regrette de trouver à Londres "une engacité peu rafinée en fait de bonne chère"; il est profondément choqué que l'on puisse "s'enyvrer sérieusement". Les gladiateurs, les combats d'animaux, la violence des querelles politiques [v. Pt. VII of our study] lui apparaissent comme autant d'indices d'une brutalité foncière. Il rabroue l'orgueil de ces voisins qui "regardent les éloges qu'on donne aux Français comme une injustice faite à leur nation". Enfin l'humeur inconstante des Anglais lui inspire quelques vers railleurs...(ibid, p. 21, B).

We have reproduced Bonno's excellent summary of the principal judgements made by our author, because it shows that these were in harmony with the views of observers at the end of the previous century, and different only in degree of severity from the views of Deslandes's immediate predecessor, Lesage. The author of La Culture et la civilisation britanniques devant l'opinion française (1713-1734), proceeds to explain how this view of the British was gradually changed, thanks to translations from the Spectator, to Muralt's Lettres and to Prévost's Suite des mémoires et aventures d'un homme de qualité. But this evolution of opinion, which did not commence until approximately the date of composition of the Nouveau Voyage, does not affect the last-named work. Instead, we must say that, although he was not positively prejudiced against the

British and may even have come across with some bias in our favour, Deslandes could hardly help reacting as most of his compatriots had done in the previous two decades. For French conceptions of good taste were too deeply rooted to allow initial enthusiasm to run away with him when faced with the realities of the British way of life.

b) Judgements of English Letters and the Theatre

Nowhere is taste more evident than in literary criticism. The Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre, published in 1717, is clearly the work of the same author who in 1715 had shown his appreciation of "preciosity" (in its finest sense); who had disclosed his libertinism in the Réflexions; and whose Latin poems testified to a sound acquaintance with the classics.

In 1717, his defence of the précieux is made ostensibly in the cause of justice. Just as he reproves the British for failing to see the merits of Montaigne, Boileau and La Bruyère - and, in view of the works referred to above, these names are significant - he avers that Voiture is not given his due in Britain:

> Je parlois un jour de Voiture
> Et je vantois l'esprit charmant
> Qu'il a reçu de la Nature.
> C'est un Anglois assûrément,
> Me dit quelqu'un d'un ton de maître,
> Ou du moins il le devoit être. (p. 236)

How terribly irritating to find that only national products are accounted excellent! But there is something more important than "justice" involved. Obviously Deslandes was highly appreciative of Voiture and of his genre. Other pieces of evidence come readily to hand. For example, when he complains of our national disdain of gallantry and our ignorance of the art of wooing, he finds his own ideal of perfection in these things amongst the characters of D'Urfé's Astrée: "Mais les Celadons & les Astrées chériroient peu cette manière de traiter les affaires de coeur; elle est trop naïve, & ces Héros

De l'exacte galanterie
Ne veulent aimer qu'avec art..." (p. 261 and n.); and,

on p. 258, there is a passage beginning:

La riante simplicité
D'une jeune & tendre Bergère...

In these lines we hear the disciple of Fontenelle speaking to these Philistines across the Channel about a noble and delicate art which is traditional in France.

The libertine strand is also to be discerned in the Nouveau Voyage, where we have already noted his references to the circle of Madame de Mazarin. Some allusions are supplementary evidence of his infatuation with the Gassendists. Generally speaking, he mentions members of two of the "schools" described by Diderot in the article Epicuréisme: the Ecole de Tournelles, grouped around the fascinating personality of Ninon de Lenclos, and the Ecole d'Auteuil, which was its first off-shoot. Ninon's circle is honoured in his references to Saint-Evremond and Madame de Mazarin. To Chapelle and Bachaumont he pays the compliment of imitating their manner of reporting a journey - that is, in a light-hearted mixture of prose and verse. Another habitué of the Auteuil circle, Molière, is applauded with a quotation from the Misanthrope, and the obscure Baron de Blot with a foot-note in which Deslandes tells his reader that he possesses some of that author's Chansons and Satires (p. 248, n). Indeed, it is the Auteuil group that he sets up as an example of "good-living": "...une sagacité peu rafinée en fait de bonne chère semble être l'appanage de cette nation [i.e. the British]: elle ne peut vanter un Héros comparable à nos Blots & à nos Chapelles, ces gens délicats & polis, l'ornement d'une table splendide" (p. 248).

And what of the third strand, classicism? Obviously, in a slender and superficial piece of writing like the Nouveau Voyage, it would have been out of place to make erudite allusions to the Greeks and Romans; and, in fact, the humanist betrays himself only in one reference to Vergil and one to Juvenal. The classical criteria of his alma mater are

perceptible, however, in seventeenth-century French standards. For instance, we note this judgement of English tragedy from the man who had been drilled in the rules of Boileau:

> Le Théatre n'a point encore secoüé le joug de la ferocité: c'est d'elle qu'un Sophocle, ou qu'un Euripide Anglois emprunte les idées du sublime. Quelles idées, grands Dieux! & qu'elles choquent la sage nature! Les Tragédies sont ici dénuées de moeurs & de caractères: c'est une histoire de trente ou quarante années, histoire plus fabuleuse souvent que celles de nos vieux Romanciers; mais en revanche les Héroïnes de la pièce sont folles, & presque tous les Héros se donnent la mort. Qu'on ajoûte à cela quelques apparitions d'esprits, une pompe funebre, & un récit de bataille: voilà une Tragédie Angloise qui sera loüée sans aucun ménagement.
>
> Le peuple approuvant ces merveilles,
> Les préfere aux doctes écrits
> Des Racines & des Corneilles,
> Ces grands & solides esprits
> Qui ménageant la force & la tendresse,
> Ont triomphé de Rome & de Gréce. (pp. 243-244)

This extract is full of significance. The author is clearly a "Modernist". It will be noted, moreover, that, although he speaks of heroines who go mad, of heroes who commit suicide, of the appearance of ghosts on the stage and of a funeral procession, he does not appear to consider the name of Shakespeare important enough to mention. Yet, from these details and others that would apply to a historical play, it is fairly clear that he has in mind, not just any "English Sophocles or Euripides", but the greatest of our dramatists; and that (to be more precise) he may have had some acquaintance with Hamlet, Othello and Richard III. We may perhaps go further still. From Deslandes's writings as a whole, we may sincerely doubt whether he was conversant with a language in which he never quotes (as he does, for example, from Italian). This would explain the writer's complete lack of appreciation of the poetry of Shakespeare and his concentration upon the more visual aspects of Shakespearean drama. In short, we suspect that he attended the London playhouse, and that the performances meant little more than a mime. Other facts come to mind. In a letter of Sept. 14 1713, he writes to Desmaizeaux requesting a copy of Addison's Cato[7], a play which he describes in the Nouveau Voyage as "médiocre", despite the British opinion that it is a work of art (p. 244, n.). But it is Boyer's translation that he seeks. The other

comments can (as we suggested) be attributed to his education at Louis-le-Grand. Racine and Corneille must have appeared superior to English dramatists - even to Addison, who was more like the former than Shakespeare was. It was natural too that he should complain of neglect of the unities and of lack of vraisemblance and bienséance in British plays. Again, it was almost inevitable that he should apply Boileau's yard-stick of 'Nature" and find our tragedies "unnatural"; that, familiar with the psychological action of Racine's theatre, he should deplore physical violence on the stage. Finally, we recall the fact that (as in the Art de ne point s'ennuyer) his aesthetic standards were those of polite society, and certainly not of "Le peuple approuvant ces merveilles...".

On the other hand, English comedy, which had consisted since the Restoration to a large extent of imitations of Molière, was received more favourably by the ex-pupil of the Jesuits:

> Les Comédies Angloises sont plus estimables; une varieté presque infinie de caracteres leur donne un air d'élegance & de vivacité qui plaît aux connoisseurs; je voudrois seulement qu'on les dépoüillât de ces plaisanteries basses, & de ces expressions grossieres qui sont le charme de la plus vile populace; mais l'ingénieuse urbanité n'est point du goût des Anglois, ils seroient fâchez qu'une image délicate leur fit sentir un ridicule grossier. On exposa il y a quelques années sur la scene le fameux M. Boyle, & son austère gravité ne fut point épargnée. Dieu sçait quelles furent les plaintes des Philosophes, dont tout le corps se crut offensé par cette Comédie satirique; mais quelque chose qu'ils tentèrent, ils ne purent jamais la faire supprimer; le plaisir de voir ouvertement railler un homme connu, l'emporta sur ce qui étoit dû à la bienséance...(pp. 244-245).8

Clearly he applied slightly different standards to comedy from those applied to tragedy: for instance, he did not object to multiplicity of characters. Nevertheless, one cardinal principle remained with which to lash these proud foreigners: whether the play were comic or tragic, its composition and presentation had to be governed by good taste. His objection to grossness was in no way dictated by a puritanical disapproval of vulgarity, but rather by his constant insistence upon an artistic standard, maintained for the benefit of the refined and elegant minority. For this reason, the critic could not countenance a drama that ridiculed a great man of

science in the face of repeated protests from the intelligent few. For the same reason he regretted the absence of the "ingénieuse urbanité" and the delicate imagery that would have commended a play to a more discerning, but necessarily smaller, public.

To what extent does the attitude of Deslandes reflect French opinion of his day? If we use the word "opinion" in the widest sense, the comparison will be unfruitful, since the French were almost completely ignorant of the English theatre in the first twenty years of the century. Few crossed the Channel, and those who did were (like Deslandes) hampered by not knowing our language. Translations, therefore, would have been of the greatest help. Yet it was not until 1713 that an English tragedy was rendered in to French. This was the same Addison's Cato, which (as we have seen) our author did not acquire until after his visit. As for comedy: apart from a few remarks in the 1684 edition of the works of Saint-Evremond - remarks which took the form of approval of the variety of entertaining ingredients of English comedy and disapproval of its construction - nothing was available to the French public before 1700, when Vanburgh's Provoked Wife was translated. And during the whole reign of Louis XIV Shakespeare was almost unheard of in France (Bonno, op. cit., p. 53). Thus the 1713 translation of Cato was an event of historic importance. It was critically reviewed by some periodicals; and, although the Journal des savants of 1714 welcomed this breath of classicism from across the Channel, the Mercure galant of March 1715 found the play lacking in regularity and dignity. In this the Mercure anticipated Deslandes' cursory judgement of the play (ibid, p. 53). In this same year (1715) there appeared the first substantial writing devoted to the English drama and printed in French. This was the translation (by Joseph de Courbeville) of Jeremy Collier's Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage - an indictment of obscenity and violence (Bonno, p. 54).

In the same year that saw the publication of the Nouveau Voyage d'Angleterre there appeared in the Journal littéraire a sixty-page Dissertation sur la poésie anglaise, which provided a much fairer and better-documented evaluation of English drama. The author (who, in Bonno's opinion, was Van Effen) had had the advantage of knowing English at the time of his visit: his work is in consequence not merely a censure upon violence and disorder, but also an appreciation of the poetic talent of our playwrights. Discussing Hamlet, for example, he does not simply refer to the strangeness of presenting a ghost to the audience, but draws attention to the fine speech Shakespeare put into the mouth of Hamlet senior. Thus, whilst on the one hand he joins in the general chorus of complaint about neglect of the unities and about lack of décence, he sees in Shakespeare what Voltaire was to discover, namely an original, if wild and uncontrolled, genius. Unlike his contemporary Deslandes, moreover, he finds merit in Cato, which he calls "un ouvrage des plus parfaits que la Nation anglaise ait produits" (cit. Bonno, p. 56 A). On the other hand, he agrees with Deslandes in finding the historical plays (and specifically Richard III) too diffuse and protracted. Indeed, the four plays upon which both writers appear to have concentrated their attention are Addison's Cato and Shakespeare's Hamlet, Othello and Richard III, clearly well-known in London at that time, despite Ballantyne's remarks to the contrary (v. Bonno, 56 B).[9]

From this brief study of the Nouveau Voyage, certain conclusions may be reached regarding our author's judgment of English appreciation of literature and drama: first, that ignorance of the English language was a severe handicap[10] that necessarily detracts from the validity of what he says about our theatre in the reign of Queen Anne; secondly, that in some respects he is almost as "insular" as those he criticizes, because he applies purely French standards (admittedly of classical origin) to the native products of another realm; thirdly, that Shakespeare was so unknown to the French reader

of 1717 that it was hardly worth while naming him; finally, that it was not from prudery but from a certain conception of good taste that he censured the vulgarity of our writers. In this, as in so many other things, he anticipated the Voltaire of 1734 and concurred with almost all his own contemporaries.

In 1717 Deslandes did not write for the multitude; and, as far as the development of his own philosophic maturity is concerned, the last few lines of the Nouveau Voyage are prophetic of future attitudes: "Les hommes, vains, aveugles & paresseux, veulent être trompez & toujours trompez de la même maniere. Pourquoi me chargerois-je du soin de les désabuser? Jaloux de nos plaisirs, ne les dépouillons pas de leurs préventions" (p. 265). We are hearing once more the deliberate exclusiveness of 1712-1715.

CHAPTER II THOMAS BURNET, SPINOZISM AND THE BOOK OF GENESIS

...Madame Deshoulières..., dans les vers de laquelle Bayle crut apercevoir des traces de spinozisme. Mais il est probable qu'il y a encore ici une confusion entre l'épicuréisme et le spinozisme (Janet, "Le Spinozisme en France", in Maîtres de la pensée moderne, ed. 1883, p. 106).

Plusieurs Théologiens ont cru & croyent encore, que l'Arbre de la Science du Bien & du Mal n'étoit autre chose que le plaisir de l'amour; & que si Adam & Eve n'eussent point péché, la voye de la génération par l'approche des deux Sexes, auroit été inconnue. De quelle manière le Monde se seroit-il donc peuplé? C'est ce que j'ignore (Pigmalion, ed. 1742, p. 88, n. (c)).

a) From Gassendism to Spinozism

Our study has led us to associate Deslandes's early philosophy chiefly with Fontenelle and with Gassendism. The recurrent theme has been "Nature" - the underlying, internal and eternal constant to which we can refer standards of moderation, of truth and of judgement, and which, counter-balancing universal and everlasting human folly, provides a hope of maintaining some sort of equilibrium in life. Secondly, we have noted how this definition of "Nature" accompanies an attempt to rehabilitate the passions, regarded by Fontenelle and Deslandes as more "natural" than intellectual values and therefore as more conducive to present contentment. This psychological approach, admittedly rudimentary, arises from a study of man himself, of the whole person compounded of passions and natural appetites. It is on this point indeed that reconciliation between hedonism and a kind of "Stoicism" has appeared possible. Such a compromise had already been made by the author of the Réflexions, who, whilst claiming to admire Stoicism was none the less openly enamoured of the ethic of Epicurus and Gassendi.

We must now proceed further. It is in this reconciliation too that an explanation of our author's increasingly pronounced

private inclination towards the ideas of Spinoza may be found. For, in contemporary interpretations of such ideas, Spinozism became merged with current Gassendist and naturalist thought. Referring to Bayle's Dictionnaire historique et critique, Janet discovers that, in the late seventeenth century, D'Hénault and Madame Deshoulières[11] had been attracted to the new form of impiety ("Le Spinozisme en Fr.", in Les Maîtres de la pens. mod., p. 106). Perhaps inspired by suggestions made by Saint-Evremond[12] (whose intellectual posterity and whose biographers, we recall, Deslandes met in 1712-13), D'Hénault went to see Spinoza in Holland, and returned without a very sound knowledge of the ideas of the Jewish thinker. These somewhat defective notions he passed on to Madame Deshoulières, who very occasionaly embodies them in her verses:

> Courez, Ruisseau, courez; fuyez-nous; reportez
> Vos ondes dans le sein des Mers dont vous sortez;
> Tandis que, pour remplir la dure destinée
> Où nous sommes assujettis,
> Nous irons reporter la vie infortunée
> Que le hazard nous a donnée
> Dans le sein du néant d'où nous sommes sortis.
> (Oeuvres de Mme. & Mlle Desh., ed. 1753, I, pp. 150-151)[13]

Another literary historian, Perrens, explains very clearly how the "bridge" between Gassendism and Spinozism came to be built at the end of the seventeenth century:

> Spinoza ...devait plaire aux gassendistes, à quiconque refusait d'entrer dans le grand courant cartésien et religieux de la seconde moitié du siècle...nos gassendistes empiriques lui savent hautement gré d'avoir étudié les rapports de l'homme avec la nature et d'expliquer de son mieux leur union.

He also points out that the Gassendists were attracted because Spinozism provided a "natural" view of the passions:

> La plupart de ceux qui ont jusqu'ici traité des passions de l'homme et de la morale, semblent en avoir parlé non pas du tout comme de choses naturelles et réglées à ce titre par les lois de la nature, mais comme de choses qui seraient en dehors de la nature...(Les Libertins en France au XVIIe siècle, ed. 1899, pp. 355-356).

Because of this association, Spinozism became confused with Epicurean currents of the late seventeenth century; and we find, for instance, that the Prince de Condé (a leading libertine) went out of his way to meet Spinoza during a trip to the Low Countries (Bayle, Dict., art. Spinoza, Rem. G).

On the other hand, the name of Spinoza became a convenient "Aunt Sally" for churchmen and free-thinkers alike, and, on the surface it would have appeared that the philosopher of Amsterdam had no supporters in either camp. Huet, who, despite his bishopric, was far from orthodox in some of his opinions, prepared a work to refute him. Malebranche, notwithstanding his inability later to give young Mairan a satisfactory explanation of how Spinoza's theocentric system differed from his own,[14] referred to the philosopher in the Méditations métaphysiques of 1683 as "le misérable Spinoza", but added (significantly) "O mon Jésus! ne m'abandonnez jamais!"; and, in the 1688 Entretiens sur la métaphysique, criticized him in the dialogue between Ariste and Théodore. In the Sermon pour la quatrième semaine de Carême, Massillon preached against the Tractatus Theologico-politicus. In the Nouvel athéisme renversé (1696), Dom François Lamy professed to refute the Dutch Jew on the grounds that if God and Nature were the same thing, there was in fact no God at all. Though delighted to have found yet another example of a philosopher commonly regarded as an atheist yet leading a virtuous life, Bayle was none the less careful to combat the metaphysical system by reducing to absurdity the universality of the Deity - a doctrine according to which (so he argued) God could be accused of self-destruction when Germans killed Turks on the field of battle. On the basis of his Quietism, Fénelon, confusing the absolute unity of substance with the collective unity of mass, concluded that what was true of the parts was necessarily true of the whole: consequently, he set against the pseudo-Spinozism of his day a doctrine much closer to the real Spinozism! (Janet, op. cit., pp. 107-123).

Eighteenth-century thinkers devoted to the task of enlightening their fellow-men were sometimes accused of Spinozism, and almost always went out of their way to repudiate such a suggestion. For example, Montesquieu was sus-

pected by the Mémoires de Trévoux of such a taint, when he asserted that "les lois sont les rapports nécessaires qui dérivent de la nature des choses" (Janet, p. 123). And Voltaire showed his ignorance of the real doctrines, when he made this comment upon the great metaphysician: "Caché sous le manteau de Descartes, son maître,/ Marchant à pas comptés, s'approche du grand Etre:/ "Pardonnez-moi, dit-il en lui parlant tout bas,/ Mais, je pense, entre nous, que vous n'existez pas' (Oeuv., ed. Mol., X, pp. 170-171), and when, in the Philosophe ignorant and with Bayle's reductio ad absurdum in mind, he considered it absurd "de faire Dieu astre et citrouille, pensée et fumier, battant et battu" (ed. Mol., XXVI, p. 67), obviously overlooking the difference between an idea or essence and a reality or concrete fact (v. Janet, op. cit., pp. 124-125).

There were, however, in eighteenth-century France a number of convinced Spinozists, whose identity and numerical strength has been revealed only by researches of fairly recent date. For instance, in 1934 Briggs drew attention to the connections between Spinozism and Newtonianism, and in particular spoke of Pérolle,[15] of the Club de l'Entresol, which must have counted amongst its members more than one devotée of the anathmetized Jew. Whilst pointing out the slowness with which a generation steeped in French rationalism accepted these ideas imported from Amsterdam, he adds that nevertheless they flourished at the Café de Procope (opposite the old Théâtre Français) around 1725, when the Comte de Plélo and his friends had formed a circle of Spinozist converts ("L'Incrédulité et la pensée anglaise en France au début du XVIIIe siècle", RHL, 1934, pp. 497-538). But the most potent source of Spinozist doctrine in eighteenth-century France appears to have been the works of Boulainvilliers.[16] In his valuable study of the circulation of clandestine writings in the first half of that century, Wade, stressing the importance of Boulainvilliers, also shows how fruitful were the meetings of the "petite société de libres chercheurs" - the Marquis d'Argenson, Leves-

que de Burigny, Duclos, Fréret, Mirabaud, Dumarsais (friend of Fontenelle) - who gathered at the house of the Maréchal Duc de Noailles. It was this group that Voltaire had in mind when he wrote his Dîner du comte de Boulainvilliers. Wade also draws our attention to the revealing contents of MSS dossiers of the Count, which give us a clear idea of the latter's pre-occupations. It is pertinent to mention an Abrégé ou courte exposition de l'opinion de Spinoza touchant la divinité, l'esprit humain, et les fondements de la morale, which, despite its incompleteness, discloses the Count's attempts to grasp the fundamental principles of Spinoza's thought. Now Wade is also of the opinion that the name of Boulainvilliers was attached to other clandestine documents circulating at the time, which may or may not have come from the pen of this author, but which could have been written by some member of the Coterie Boulainvilliers, as the American writer calls it (The Clandestine Organization and Diffusion of Philosophic Ideas in France (1700-1750), ed. 1938, Ch. I and Concln.).

We have seen how the influence of ideas of Spinozist origin affected French thought and particularly clandestine literature in the first half of the century. This influence was secretly fostered in the first two decades of the century, and more precisely until the death of Boulainvilliers in 1722. We cannot prove Deslandes's connection with the Coterie to which Wade refers,[17] but we know of his friendship with Fontenelle, who in his turn was intimate with such men as Mirabaud and Dumarsais; and we learn from the Duc de Saint-Simon (Mém., ed. 1857, VI, p. 336) that Noailles was a close friend of the Duc d'Aumont, Deslandes's chef de mission of 1712-13. The opportunities of being introduced to the circle certainly existed, therefore.[18] Moreover, it is possible that he frequented libertine circles in Paris, even after assumption of duties in Brest.[19] He certainly became interested in Spinozism which he mentions several times (with conventional refutation "à la Boulainvilliers", of course) in 1737 and 1756, and appears

to comprehend singularly well. Which aspects of the work of Spinoza affected him? If our suppositions prove correct, we may declare that he was interested first in the exegetist (before 1720), and then in the metaphysician (1737-56). This order of events is not unexpected, since the influence of Spinoza was naturally exerted in two directions, and since it was logical to begin with the Tractatus of 1670 before proceeding to the Ethics of 1677. The Tractatus stimulated rational examination of the Scriptures, the study of possible authors of these writings, the comparison of texts to show contradictions and logical non sequiturs. On the positive side, it encouraged men to look to the Bible only for moral guidance, and to find that only where it was unequivocally provided - in passages that accorded with common sense notions of virtue, of humanitarianism and so on. The Ethics supplied a logical (almost geometrical) system of philosophy and a completely untheological view of the meaning of things. By virtue of these two publications Spinoza was commonly regarded as an atheist, not only because he dared to question the validity of biblical sources and traditions, but also (as we saw previously) because his Ethics were wrongly supposed to dispense with God altogether. It is for this reason that enlightened thinkers, seeing in Spinozism the answer to some imposing problems, were obliged to keep their opinions to themselves or to limit their currency to a small group of initiated comrades. It was for this reason also that clandestine literature was sold furtively in the cafés of Paris by colporteurs. One such MSS is particularly intriguing to the student of Deslandes's philosophic development.

b) Thomas Burnet and the Mazarine MSS

In Wade's impressive list of over a hundred MSS in circulation between 1700 and 1750, two items catch our eye: on p. 13 of the book, numbers 39 and 40 (Bibl. Mazarine, 1194), composed by a writer who for Wade is "anonymous", but who

is designated as "M. D***". Now, Deslandes usually employs this form of pseudonym; and a microfilm of the two MSS - which attracted attention since they were concerned with Thomas Burnet, for whom Deslandes appears to have had a warm regard at the time of composing the Histoire critique de la philosophie and whom he may even have met in London seeing that Burnet was Master of the Charterhouse between 1685 and 1715 - reinforced suspicions. The handwriting looks very much like that of Deslandes,[20] and it therefore appears likely that an inédit of our author (dated by Wade between 1700-1719) has come to light. At least that is the assumption we shall make in the pages that follow.

The MSS is located amongst a number that are vaguely "Spinozist" in colour. This was not the first or only time that the name of Thomas Burnet was associated with such literature. For instance, a printed volume in the B. Mus. (700.e.20 (1)) bears the composite title: Miracles no Violation of the Laws of Nature. It consists of a translation of the sixth chapter of Spinoza's Tractatus theologico-politicus and extracts from Thomas Burnet's Telluris Theoria Sacra. More important still: Boulainvilliers himself used Burnet's Sacred Theory in his Abrégé d'histoire ancienne,[21] which was - intended to be a universal history in two volumes for the education of his sons. The aim of Boulainvilliers in this treatise (composed between 1700 and 1703) was to establish an acceptable chronology and genealogy, to provide a cultural history of Antiquity, showing the birth of the arts and the progress of science, and to "reconcile" miracles, "même ceux de la création et du déluge",[22] with natural philosophy (v. Wade, op. cit., pp. 106-107). This means that the Count had a purpose not unlike that of the author of the Histoire critique de la philosophie of 1737, and this fact too will be found to be significant. Boulainvilliers's Abrégé steers a course between rationalism and orthodoxy, largely because the author was writing for his own children. But he takes much of his material from Thomas Burnet and Spinoza. The former's inspiration is,

of course, most evident in passages devoted to Creation and the Flood; that of the latter in sections in which Moses, miracles and prophecy are under discussion. And, despite the author's attempt to pursue a kind of middle course, the Abrégé appears to be mainly a catalogue of errors in the Book of Genesis and a demonstration of its incompatibility with right reason.[23]

What is abundantly clear so far is that Burnet, despite his claim that he had no wish to overthrow belief in the Scriptures, was at this time regardedas comparable with Spinoza; and if we look further into the matter we perceive the main reasonsfor interest in these writers: a) since Cartesians had been careful to adjust cosmogony and cosmology to an ecclesiastical view of the Universe, and since their exlanation of the workings of things depended upon acceptance of the plenum and of vortices (currently discredited by Newtonians), these aspects of Cartesianism were regarded by "advanced" thinkers - and particularly those who had been influenced by English thought - as outmoded and archaic; b) since Spinoza and Richard Simon had performed such convincing tours d'adresse in the field of biblical exegesis, and since people like Van Dale had cast real doubts on the validity of prophecy and supernaturalism, it was not surprising that the Tractatus should appeal to sceptics and rationalists in the early eighteenth century - particulary (we add once more) those who had come into contact with English deists.

With these facts in mind, let us turn now to the Mazarine MSS 1194. The first, and more important document is entitled: Extrait de l'ouvrage intitulé Doutes ou objections de Thomas Burnet sur le Premier Chapitre de la Genèse. In the small space left between the title and the text we read: "conciliées avec l'Ecriture par Mr. D...". This remark, crushed into an insufficient interval, was obviously added for safety's sake. Indeed, it was hardly necessary at all, since Burnet himself had often claimed not to be undermining the sacred

edifice (v. Archaeologiae Philosophicae etc., ed. 1728, p.542). The Extrait is ostensibly concerned with the ninth chapter of the second book of Burnet's Archaeologiae Philosophicae (1692), but in fact it takes in more than a single chapter of that work and (as we shall see) includes a long digression not to be found in that work. Burnet's chapter, headed Dubiis & objectionibus occurritur, quae ab iis, qui literae Hexaëmeri adhaerent, contra praefatam expositionem urgeri poterunt, is devoted to five possible objections which could be made against his theories about the Six Days's Work (and other matters related to Creation and the Deluge), and of course to Burnet's five replies. The main substance of this chapter can be summed up as follows:

1. Did Creation involve the use of new matter? No, what is meant by the Mosaic text is that matter was given a new form.

2. If matter existed before Creation, for what purpose and where did it exist? It is difficult to say; but we have the spectacle of new stars and comets, which at least increases the credibility of what we assert.

3. Did Moses fit his account of Creation to the needs of an ignorant people? Did he, in fact, believe the same story himself? Truth is sacred (answers Burnet); yet there are degrees of truth. It is quite clear that Mosaic physics do not accord with modern scientific ideas. This does not prove the ignorance of Moses; for, as in so many cases in the history of ideas and beliefs, there was probably a double doctrine - one for the enlightened few and one for the unenlightened many. For it often becomes a duty to conceal the full truth until people are ready to receive it; and if Moses had told all that he knew, much of what he said would have been super-fluous. (Here, then, is another writer who sees the value of concealing "advanced" ideas from the multitude)

4. Would it not have been wiser if Moses had kept silent altogether about cosmology and allied subjects? The reply to this is that he could not do so. Since neighbouring peoples

had their own primitive notions of these things, it was better that Moses should tell the Hebrews as much as they needed to know. The same could be said of Christ and the Apostles.

5. If we are allowed to depart from the literal sense of Genesis, where will the process finish? What rule, therefore, must we follow in interpretation? Burnet replies: remembering that "natural light" is God's gift to man, we must accept a version which accords with "Nature" and with intelligence. And we must not reject the literal reading except in cases where our knowledge and common-sense make this unacceptable.

Such is the material on which Deslandes's first MSS is ostensibly based. Yet he himself admits at the end that he has strayed from the path marked out by his precursor: "On peut s'être aperçû que j'ai changé de dessein dans cet écrit, car ne pensant d'abord qu'à faire le récit des difficultés de Burnet suivant le Titre, l'idée de la conciliation m'est venue à laquelle j'ai plus adhéré qu'à la première" (p. 46). This remark would suggest that Deslandes's commentary is intended to be more orthodox than that of the English writer, but, as we shall see, this is rarely the case. He begins his Extrait with what we shall discover to be a favourite theme — a theme that harmonizes with the exclusiveness of his early works, and which we have recognized in Burnet (v. Arch. Phil., p. 84). On the first page of the MSS we read:

> Les Orientaux observoient deux methodes differentes dans la tradition de leurs dogmes theologiques & philosophiques, l'une populaire et l'autre secrette; il semble que l'Ecriture Sainte fait un frequent usage de l'un [sic] et de l'autre. Mais en la lisant il ne faut jamais s'écarter du sens litteral sans une évidente nécessité... (cp. H.c., II, 442).

With this principle before him the author proposes to examine whether the Book of Genesis is a parabolic history of the Creation, of man and of his experiences in Terrestrial Paradise. This coincides with the intention of Burnet, as expressed on p. 333 of the edition we are using.

He deals first with the Creation of man and woman (Arch. Phil., pp. 378 and 387). Scripture tells us that Adam came from Earth and Eve from one of Adam's ribs. This statement

raises immediately problems for common-sense. Was the rib in question necessary or unnecessary to Adam? If unnecessary, why did God create superfluous parts? Had He not enough matter at his disposal, without taking some from man? In any case, what is the proportion in size between a man's rib and a complete female? If we interpret the text literally, we must decide either that God multiplied matter or that He added some from elsewhere! (Obviously, then, the literal reading makes nonsense; and obviously we are dealing with a parable.)

He next discusses Terrestrial Paradise.[24] This, he believes, can be understood only if we accept Burnet's Theory regarding the Flood. He does not therefore (like Huet, for instance) try to imagine that the four rivers were the Ganges, Tigris, Euphrates and Nile, but accepts Burnet's statement that we cannot possibly know the geography of the ante-diluvian world, so different from the deformed relic on which we now live (Arch. Phil., pp. 388-390). In treating of the Serpent and Eve, Deslandes appears to have profited by the storm of protest that greeted Burnet's imaginary conversation between the two. But if he omits this detail, he follows Burnet closely in the rest. The Serpent's power of speech, he argues, creates reasonable doubts in the reader's mind. Indeed, nothing could be more unreasonable than to suppose that it could converse at all. For if it were accorded the power of speech, we should have to conclude that this animal was possessed of reason. Thus we are driven back to the supposition that it was a supernatural being. Yet, if this be true, why did Eve not express greater surprise when it spoke to her? More important: why did she accept its advice? Why, finally, should the filthiest of creatures be given the privilege of speech? (Arch. Phil., pp. 392-393). Again, the "supernatural" explanation does not fit the Mosaic account; for Moses did not affirm that the Devil borrowed the Serpent's organs to converse with Eve. And what of Eve herself? If she had been alive only for a few hours, how did she comprehend the Serpent's language? Why was she not supported by supernatural forces, since human destinies

depended on her? And what about the Serpent's punishment? If the Devil merely used its organs, why should the unfortunate creature have been blamed and punished (Arch. Phil., p. 394)? Moreover, if it were condemned to crawl on its belly, does that mean that originally it walked on legs? Evidently the Mosaic account is full of the most insuperable problems (unless, of course, the whole thing is but a parable to explain the origin of evil).

It is equally hard to understand what Moses said about the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.[25] Is it reasonable to suppose that a fruit could confer immortality; and, if such a fruit existed, why did it not reproduce itself?(Arch. Phil., p. 395). We are told that the Tree of Knowledge engendered modesty. Was that a good thing? Was it an advantage to notice nudity and be ashamed of it? Then again, the whole business of making garments takes some explaining. Could our earliest forbears sew without needle or thread? And, if God provided skins of animals, did He kill some of the newly-created beasts for that purpose? Did He skin them alive? If so, He was cruel. In any case, so few animals existed at that moment that the species involved would probably have perished altogether (Arch. Phil., p. 396). The question of banishment is also one which provides an unacceptable picture of divine action. Did the Almighty need the Cherubim to guard His Paradise? Surely, he could have uprooted trees, or even thrown a belt of sea-water around the garden, since (as the future naval historian tells us) "adam n'avoit pas l'usage de la navigation" (p. 8; Arch. Phil., p. 397).

Matters of chronology are also involved. Did all this happen in one day? Did it take the Almighty six days to create everything, and six hours for a mere serpent to upset the plan?(Arch. Phil., p. 400). No, we must regard the tale as parabolic; and in this conclusion we are not alone. Celsus thought that we were here confronted with old wives' tales; Origen deemed the literal sense unacceptable; and

many intelligent persons since then have presumed that Moses deliberately depicted a severe Deity in order that he could command obedience to laws he had given to the Hebrews (Arch. Phil., pp. 400-401, 440-441). The conclusions the English writer and Deslandes would both have us accept are thus very clear. It is best to treat the Mosaic account of Creation and the Fall of Man as parabolic (cf. H.c.,I, 171-172). In fact Deslandes does no more than Burnet to "reconcile" science and reason with the biblical text. He merely shows that a literal reading often produces a mass of absurdities. Therefore, in accordance with the rule, Nullibi recedendum à literâ sine necessitate (Arch. Phil., p. 437), we are of necessity obliged to find alternative interpretations. We have now reached the tenth page of the Extrait, at which point Deslandes parts company with the English author to seek his sources elsewhere.

The "independent" section that follows appears to be the fruit of Deslandes's interest in Arabic (and other languages) disclosed in 1713 when he asks Desmaizeaux to tell him the price of Walton's Biblia Polyglotta,[26] and to report to him whether the Proverbia Arabica, annotated by Scaliger and Erpen, and Erpen's Arabic Thesaurus Grammaticus and the Historia Arabica are available in London (Birch MSS of B. Mus., № 4283, letter of Aug. 7 1713, post-scriptum), a fact which may well establish the date of composition of the MSS as posterior to 1713. The reason for this interest is not difficult to discover: he is finding material for attacks against the hallowed pre-eminence of the Hebrews. On this occasion it is the Hebrew language he decries. Chaldean, Arabic and Syriac are (he tells us in the MSS) from the same source as Hebrew.[27] In fact, they are all dialects of an unknown language. To support these assertions he discusses, in different oriental languages, the words for "place", "species", "serpent", "honey" etc., finally concluding: "Il faut reconnoitre que l'hebreu

est fort inférieur à toutes les langues que l'on connoit" (p.20), since it is obscure and suffers from poverty of vocabulary. And, just as he stresses that Hebrew is not the "original" language, he goes on to assert that "Adam" is not a name at all but a kind of epithet (p. 23) - a comment that re-appears in slightly different form in 1737 (H.c.,I, 215-216).

After this preliminary linguistic discussion we pass to the important question of Moses' authorship of the Pentateuch (pp. 24-25), and here the Tractatus of Spinoza is evidently a chief source of his arguments. He begins by admitting the strength and antiquity of the tradition which attributes the books of the Law to Moses and regards Moses as the world's first historian. At the same time he mentions the fact that Moses was often accused of partiality towards his own nation and that his "miracles" were many times disputed. Again, he continues, it has been doubted whether Moses composed the Pentateuch at all:

...mais ce n'est que dans le dernier siecle qu'il s'est trouvé des hommes qui plus subtils et plus pointilleux que les anciens, ont crû trouver dans le texte même que nous recevons comme étant de Moyse, des preuves suffisantes pour soutenir qu'il n'en est point l'auteur. on a repondu amplement aux objections qu'ils ont formées et fait voir que de dix-neuf textes sur quoi ils s'établissent, il n'y on a que quatre qui concluent à leur fin, savoir le recit de la mort de Moyse, la génération des Rois d'Idumée, le changement du nom des villes de Dan et d'Hebron, et le recit de la manne qui paroissent manifestement ajoutés d'une main etrangere et plus nouvelle que Moyse. Les difficultés qui regardent les autres passages dependent de l'interpretation de certaines particules hebraïques dont le sens n'est pas bien connû. Cependant à tout prendre, il y a lieu de dire que s'il n'est pas vrai qu'il y ait une difference de stile dans ce livre qui vient d'autre cause que de la propriété de la Langue où il est écrit; du moins il faut reconnoitre qu'outre que ce stile est plus ou moins concis en certaines parties du Livre, trop étendu dans les unes, trop serré dans les autres, on remarque dans tout l'ouvrage fort peu d'arrangement dans les matieres; ce qui prouve qu'encore que le fond du Livre soit certainement de Moyse, il est arrivé des alterations considerables, soit pour l'ordre des choses, soit pour des additions manifestes, mais avec tout cela il n'est pas moins vrai que Moyse en est le veritable autour à peu près comme l'on pouroit dire qu' Homere est le veritable Ecrivain de l'Iliade et de l'Odissée, quoique les Rapsodeurs ayent fait plusieurs changemens à l' ordre de ses ouvrages, et qu'ils en ayent altéré divers textes, de sorte que prenant la chose au pire, Moyse sera toujours reconnu pour l'auteur assuré du Pentateuque (pp. 24-26).

In this passage the prominence given to difficulties and objections is hardly counterbalanced by the monotonous refrain of prudent affirmation. Moreover, the objections listed

are precisely those upon which Spinoza laid stress in the Tractatus Theologico-politicus. Taking them in the order observed in the MSS, here are the relevant remarks:

1. The death of Moses: "It is also to be particularly observed that in this history it is not only narrated how Moses died and was buried, and how the Jews mourned for him for thirty days, but above all this we have a comparison instituted between him and all the prophets who lived after him..." (op. cit., Engl. tr., 1862, p. 174).

2. Generation of Kings of Idumea: " The historical narrative is sometimes carried on beyond the time of Moses...Here the historian undoubtedly informs us that the Idumeans were ruled by kings before David subdued them..." (ibid, pp. 174-175).

3. Change of names of towns: " It is further to be remarked that certain places are mentioned by names which they did not bear in the time of Moses...; as, for example, where Abraham pursued the enemy even to Dan..." (ibid, p. 174).

4. The eating of manna: "...in Exodus we learn that the children of Israel were fed with manna for 40 years; until they came to peopled territory, until they reached the borders of the land of Canaan..."(ibid, p. 174).

5. Style: "The parenthesis here clearly proves that he who wrote this portion of Scripture lived long, very long after Moses, for such a style of narrative belongs only to one who speaks of things of the most remote antiquity..." (ibid, p. 172).

6. Particles: "A second source of ambiguity exists in the numerous meanings that are attached to the Hebrew conjunctions and adverbs...Ki has seven or eight significations, wherefore, although, if, when, inasmuch, as, because, combustion &c., and so almost of all particles" (ibid, p. 155).

7. Arrangement of material: "But there is no occasion here to pass the whole of the Pentateuch under review; any one who but observes that in these five books precept and narrative are jumbled together without order, that there is no regard to time, and that one and the same story is often met with again

and again, will certainly come to the conclusion that in the Pentateuch we have...materials for history rather than the digested history itself" (ibid, p. 189).

Thus all the difficulties mentioned were already in Spinoza, who was certainly a subtle and fastidious student of this part of the Old Testament! They do not, however, appear to lead the author to either of Spinoza's conclusions, that Moses was not the writer of the Pentateuch and that Ezra was. In judging Deslandes's attitude to this matter, we must acknowledge that openly to support Spinozist ideas was to run grave risks, and we must remember that when, twenty years later, he discussed Hebrew opponents of the Mosaic view of Creation, he was careful in laying before his readers Spinoza's basic notion of the single substance to preface that exposition with the observation that Spinoza was "dangereusement célèbre", and at the end to label that philosophy "un système si absurde" (H.c., I, 178-180). It was prudent to do so, and these remarks deceived only those they were intended to deceive.

How far, then, does he lean in the opposite direction? Let us look at a defence of orthodoxy on this very issue. At one point in the Discours sur l'histoire universelle (ed. 1815, Pt. II, Ch. XIII), Bossuet takes the Spinozists to task on the question of the authorship of the Pentateuch. Ezra, he argues, was not the writer of these books. At the time of captivity it is inconceivable that the Jews should have contemplated receiving from Ezra a whole code of law (ibid, II, 137). Furthermore, the style of the sacred writings is not that of Ezra or any other individual, but changes with the period in which the book was composed. The miracles were not added, but are an essential part of the narrative (ibid, II, 140). Constantly Bossuet advances the continuous and ancient authority of the Christian Church for what he asserts, and points out that Christ himself accepted Moses' authorship (ibid, II, 141-143). In defence of the Mosaic-authorship-tradition he also has this to say:

Que dit-on pour autoriser la supposition du Pentateuque? et que peut-on objecter à une tradition de trois mille ans soutenue

par sa propre force et par la suite des choses? Rien de suivi, rien de positif, rien d'important; des chicanes sur des nombres sur des lieux, ou sur des noms; et de telles observations, qui dans toute autre matiere ne passeroient tout au plus que pour de vaines curiosités incapables de donner atteinte au fond des choses, nous sont ici alléguées comme faisant la décision de l'affaire la plus sérieuse qui fût jamais! (ibid, II, 143).

That of course is exactly how to confound Spinoza and his disciples: stigmatize them as prejudiced because they are absurdly attached to "irrelevant" detail! Difficulties encountered in the text are attributed to its antiquity. If names of places, if dates present problems, what does that matter if the writer is divinely inspired? (ibid, II, 144). As for alterations in the text, surely they prove that there was no single author of holy writ? Surely this Ezra who is so popular with the critics would have achieved greater consistency? Continuing to pour scorn on those who would find "trifling" discrepancies, Bossuet next refers to the much-discussed account of the death of Moses: "...d'où vient qu'on trouve sa mort à la fin du livre qu'on lui attribue? Quelle merveille que ceux qui ont continué son histoire aient ajouté sa fin bienheureuse..."(ibid, II, 146)? It is all so easily explained away by the bishop: "Quoi donc!..", he exclaims, "on aura peut-être expliqué un nom de ville changé par le temps; à l'occasion de la manne dont le peuple a été nourri durant quarante ans, on aura marqué le temps où cessa cette nourriture céleste...?" (ibid, II, 146-147).

Such is the tone adopted by the professional defender of the faith. With ridicule and disdain he reduces Spinozist objections to absurdity. How right indeed is he in concluding that Moses was the author of these writings! All his "arguments" lead him to that conclusion. But Deslandes has the same conclusion <u>without the same arguments to support it.</u> On the contrary he appears to make much of the sceptics' case and to consider the defence "already amply made by others". Indeed (to paraphrase his own words), his attitude appears to be: "although the basis of the Pentateuch is the work of Moses, yet there are many alterations and obscurities to which I should like to draw attention." It is important,

moreover, to realize the lameness of his conclusion. The tone of the phrase "prenant la chose au pire" is far removed from the exalted fervour of Bossuet's refutation, and the "profane comparison" between Moses and Homer only serves to reduce the whole issue to a secular level. Consequently, whilst it would be rash to label the author of this long paragraph "Spinozist", we may say that the negative arguments hold more attractions than the positive defence of the Mosaic tradition and that he is thoroughly conversant with the opinions of the critics. If Deslandes is not a Spinozist in the second decade of the century, he is at least familiar with parts of the Tractatus.

As for the remaining twenty pages of the Extrait, it would be tedious to show how closely he once more follows the English writer, Burnet. We shall therefore content ourselves with the general trends of the commentary. He insinuates (as Burnet did) that, far from being a universal lawgiver, Moses provided moral rules to check his own unruly rabble. For example: to oblige them to observe a day of rest, he depicted the Almighty as resting on the mystic seventh day (Arch. Phil. p. 421).[28] Something similar may be said about taboos on eating certain foods (p. 27). Realizing that he was dealing with a backward people, Moses did not hold forth on the scientific principles of hygiene.

This leads Deslandes to a digression regarding the necessity of telling the common people only those aspects of truth likely to be useful to them. Thus, like modern Christian missionaries to the Far East(some of whom Deslandes had the opportunity of meeting at Louis-le-Grand), who discovered the advisability of adapting not only their choice of words but also their ideas to an audience of primitive folk, Moses deliberately kept quiet about many things he knew to be true. We are faced, then, with the recurrent suggestion that the Mosaic writings may be satisfying to the multitude, but unsatisfying to the intelligent minority (p. 30). The digression is important, then, since it underlines a principle we have already found many times in the work of Deslandes.

Whilst he is prepared to acknowledge the "inspiration" of Moses, Deslandes repeatedly stresses the parabolic nature of Genesis, and repeatedly insinuates that it must be re-interpreted in the light of modern knowledge.(p. 33). That, in fact, was what Burnet had tried to do in the Sacred Theory (v. Arch. Phil., p. 434). There are times, however, when our author considers that Burnet did not perhaps go far enough. For instance, the fact that, in the first chapter of Genesis, the command "Let there be light!"[29] precedes (or seems to precede) the creation of the sun, Burnet has described as inexplicable by scientific reasoning: "Eodem modo cùm de Luce primigeniâ agitur, in primo die creationis, id Phaenomenon est pariter inexplicabile ratione physicâ..." (Arch. Phil., p. 419), concluding that such trifling inexactitudes were of no concern to a populace so limited in understanding. On the other hand, Deslandes, mindful that he is "reconciling Burnet with Scripture"[30], finds a different solution. Burnet's "vague light" (i.e. without obvious source (Arch. Phil.p. 421)) he deems incomprehensible. He prefers the "parabolic" explanation:

> on poura donc sans consequence proposer l'autre sens de ces paroles qui peuvent signiffier naturellement que Dieu voulut dès le premier jour que le cahos fut éclairé, c'est à dire que les tenebres et l'obscurité fussent percés par la Lumière, ce qui se fit lorsqu'il plut à Dieu d'ordonner que des matieres terrestres s'affaissassent vers le centre du cahos; on conçoit par l'exemple des brouillards une idée fort juste de ce qui se passe pour lors; car comme le brouillard derobe la Lumiere à proportion de son epaisseur, on juge bien qu'un Cahos ou tous les atomes des matieres étoient confondûs ne laissoit aucun passage aux rayons du soleil, de sorte que si la superficie etoit éclairée, l'interieur etoit rempli de tenebres epaisses, et palpables. Pour changer cette disposition, il n'etoit pas besoin de créer une lumiere vague au milieu du cahos, il a suffi de former la Terre par la residence des parties crasses, et aussitôt la passage a été rendu facile à la Lumiere, d'ou il suit que ces paroles la Lumiere soit faite ne veulent exprimer autre chose sinon un commandement que la matiere du cahos soit éclairée...(p. 35).

This attempt to accord the biblical account with modern notions of light and with a vague sort of atomism is ingenious, and (certainly in the comparison with fogs) it announces the natural scientist of the various Recueils.

Next he mentions "firmament", which he regards as a word of little meaning invented to meet the needs of a primitive people who considered the sky to be a vault (p. 37; Arch.Phil.,

pp. 417-420). Again, why do we read of a wise and all-powerful Deity who created so much water that He could not see the land? Because the Jews, in a parched country, would be more respectful to a God who appeared to be such a superb rain-maker! (p.38). In short, the whole Creation-story is so perplexing to reason and common-sense that we must find a "philosophic" interpretation of it (p. 42; Arch. Phil., pp. 426-427). In so doing we need not offend the Deity, who works through Nature and whose love of order is as much an attribute as His mighty power. Would it not therefore be more reasonable to suppose that the work of Creation occupied six years or six hundred years (pp. 45-46; Arch. Phil., p. 425)? For it is likely that Moses used the word "days" because of the limitations of his audience.

Such is the gist of the argument Deslandes extracted from Burnet's Archaeologiae Philosophicae. It is distinguished from that of Burnet chiefly in the digression that leads us to Spinoza's Tractatus; but it is generally different when Burnet expresses mystification, for Deslandes appears anxious to explain everything in terms of the "double doctrine" theme of the early pages, and in terms of the corollary that he is dealing with a huge parable intended for a primitive and ignorant community. Both authors were aware that they were treading dangerous ground. For this reason Burnet was careful to assure his reader that he did not wish to damage his religious convictions (Arch. Phil., p. 426), and Deslandes to express delight that he had been able to reconcile the ideas of the English writer with the Holy Scripture. But, since he constantly regarded the Mosaic writings in a way that most orthodox Christians would have judged deistical or sceptical, we must conclude that much of his "pious submission" was dictated by motives of prudence.

c) The Influence of Burnet and the Significance of the MSS

The manuscript Extrait de la théorie sacrée de la terre follows the more important commentary. As it is long and detailed, we shall content ourselves with parts of the summary provided by Deslandes himself in the Histoire critique de la philosophie:

> Avant le Déluge,..., la terre étoit d'une égalité parfaite, sans mers, sans montagnes, sans isles, sans précipices. L'Ecliptique se rencontroit dans le plan de l'Equateur, & l'axe de la Terre étoit parallèle à l'axe du Soleil....Les fleuves couloient des Pôles vers l'Equateur, & venoient se perdre sans les sables brûlans de la Zone torride...Aussi Burnet place-t-il sous le Pôle Arctique le Paradis Terrestre, ce jardin délicieux, où nos premiers Pères furent créés, & où à force d'être heureux ils cesserent bien-tôt de l'être.
>
> The Flood changed the face of the Earth:
>
> Les secousses terribles & reitérées qu'elle souffit alors, firent changer son centre de gravité...L'Ecliptique sortit du plan de l'Equateur, & s'en éloigna de 23 degrés 30 minutes... Aussi ne voit-on plus rien de pur ni de simple dans l'Univers: tout ce qui s'y présente à nos yeux est altéré & défiguré... (I, pp. 48-50).

In his second Extrait, Deslandes does not follow his model with scrupulous regard for sequence. Nor does he introduce much of the critical element into his survey: instead he presents a résumé of the principal chapters of the Sacred Theory of the Earth, and occasionally supports the argument with illustrations of his own. One of these illustrations points first to the date of composition and secondly tends to confirm our assumptions regarding authorship of the Mazarino MSS. On pp. 97-98, speaking if the "rideaux qui sont si frequens aux bords de la mer", he continues:

> J'ai souvent remarqué avec admiration comment les rideaux se suivent par étages depuis le bout de quelques montagnes jusqu' au profond des vallées et comment la batture des Terres est plus forte quand elle est exposée aux vents les plus rudes de chaque pays, comme l'est celui d'ouest en cette Province.

Now we know that, after his return from England, Deslandes lodged in Montmartre with La Tuillerie, and that he was probably in Paris until 1714, when he assumed his appointment in Brest. The province referred to in the above passage is therefore probably Brittany. Thus this remark appears to be additional confirmation that the work was written between

1714 and 1719 (if we accept Wade's unexplained final limit), and that Deslandes was indeed the author.

Furthermore, the whole undertaking proves the early interest of Deslandes in Burnet's Theory and reveals almost unqualified approval. The tone of the second Extrait is, for example, very different from that of Buffon, whose Histoire et théorie de la terre (1749) is dated as having been composed around the year 1744. (He contrived a different theory in his Epoques de la nature.) In the third article of the Preuves that accompany the Histoire et théorie, he comments:

> Cet échantillon du système de Burnet suffit pour en donner une idée; c'est un roman bien écrit, et un livre qu'on peut lire pour s'amuser, mais qu'on ne doit pas consulter pour s'instruire. L'auteur ignorait les principaux phénomènes de la terre, et n'était nullement informé des observations; il a tout tiré de son imagination qui, comme l'on sait, sert volontiers aux dépens de la vérité (Oeuvres, ed. Flourens, I, 95).

A few pages later he is more precise in his objections: "...il n'y a aucune cause naturelle qui puisse produire sur la surface entière de la terre la quantité d'eau qu'il a fallu pour couvrir les plus hautes montagnes" (ibid, pp. 103-104). And, in the Second Discours of his own Théorie, he attacks this "théologien hétérodoxe, la tête échauffée de visions poétiques" who "croit avoir vu créer l'univers..." (ibid, p. 33). As it were in reply to this visionary, in his own treatise he agrees that the Earth was covered by water at some time, but points out that the "ruins" we inhabit supply, in their variety of climates, abundant subsistence for all sorts of creatures. The great changes in the Earth's surface probably occurred immediately after Creation and not at the Flood. It is therefore imprudent to suggest that the antediluvian Earth was much different from our own. His own conclusions are that it was the ebb and flow of waters that produced mountains and other geological irregularities; and that waters from on high continually modify the effects of the sea and will one day return parts of the Earth to the ocean and allow others to become new continents. Thus, before the Deluge he supposes that the Earth "étant habitée par les mêmes espèces d'hommes et d'animaux, devait être nécessairement telle, à très-peu près, qu'elle est aujourd'hui" (ibid, I, 98).

If we remember Deslandes's summary of The Sacred Theory of the Earth, we shall perceive that this conclusion of Buffon places him in a position exactly antipodal to that of the "Burnetians".[31] We recall Buffon's optimistic judgement of climatic diversity. Turning now to the Extrait and the Histoire critique of 1737, we note these sentiments, common to both:

> ...je raporte ma vuë sur notre globe; en considerant sa petitesse en lui même, le desordre de sa structure et exterieure et interieure, la place qu'il occupe dans l'univers, les incommodités de son habitation, l'intemperature de ses divers climats, la courte vie des hommes...il en faut retrancher la moitié qui n'est que de l'eau salée; le reste se réduit encore à peu de choses: si on en retire les climats inhabitables par le froid et par le chaud, les sables, les Rochers, les forets, les deserts, les solitudes, les Lacs, les marais, les fleuves, les Terres steriles et infructueuses, il n'en demeurera pas le tiers pour l'habitation des hommes (Extr., pp. 104-105).

> Qu'on considere la Terre...La plus grande partie n'offre que des amas d'eau, & ne peut convenir qu'à ceux de tous les animaux où l'organisation est la moins recherchée. De cette terre, les extrêmités & le milieu paroissent inhabitables, à cause de deux obstacles qu'on ne peut surmonter, le grand froid & le grand chaud. De ce qui reste, une partie est hérissée de montagnes couvertes de neiges, de rochers escarpés, de précipices très-profonds, de forêts impénétrables (H.c., I, 268).

This is surely sufficient to justify our looking ahead at this point to the Histoire critique, and assessing the possible influence of the Extraits in the Mazarine MSS upon our author's major work. In so doing we shall bear in mind that, generally speaking, we are also studying the influence upon Deslandes's mature writing of Thomas Burnet. In the Histoire critique de la philosophie we observe that Burnet and Whiston are quoted at considerable length when Creation and the Flood are under discussion (I, 48-49, 230-231); and that, on the last-named occasion, the views of these English writers are connected with Ancient notions of re-formation, rather than creation of matter (I, 228). At another place in the same volume it is made quite clear that the Jews were not a scientific people (I, 175), and that consequently Mosaic cosmology had to be presented in such a way as to commend it to the ignorant multitude (I, 171). The first Extrait repeatedly concluded that, in reading Mosaic writings, we are often confronted with parables: in 1737 it is suggested that it was in Egypt - and because he was associated with Pharaoh's

daughter - that Moses learned the methods the Egyptian élite employed for concealing the truth under a cloak of allegory (I, 17). It is also suggested that the allegorical verbiage that resulted from this apprenticeship obscured the "proofs" of religion (~~I, 446~~); and that, in respect of this deliberate obscurity, Moses was the precursor of Saint Mark and the school of Alexandria (II, 442). We recall what was said in the first Extrait about Jewish taboos on certain foods: in 1737 it is pointed out that comestibles banned in Egypt for reasons of hygiene, were later subjected to the same ban,-but this time with more insistence upon religious interdict - by the Jews.- In short, "...ce qui n'étoit en Egypte qu'un ptécepte [sic] de santé, devint parmi les Hébreux une pratique de Réligion" [sic] (II, 57).[32] Again, in a more general way, it is hinted that, being primarily concerned with keeping the Hebrew nation in the paths of righteousness, Moses discovered that the best method was "de la persuader fortement que quelque Divinité à les yeux incessamment ouverts sur toute sa conduite" (I, 175).

The Six Days' Work is mentioned in the second volume (pp. 79-80), where a quotation in Italian from Pietro Sarpi[33] suggests that, if we add the "day of rest", we have yet another example of the prevalence of that mystic seven we find in the sacraments, virtues, deadly sins, plagues of Egypt, planets &c. We have observed how the first Extrait deals with the Garden of Eden. Difficulties concerning the Serpent are stated in another form in the Histoire critique, and it is interesting to see how craftily he treats the topic there:

> En examinant les avantages mystérieux que les Anciens attribuoient aux serpens, j'en ai quelquefois recherché la cause. Il me semble en gros, que tout cela n'a été imaginé que d'après celui qui tenta Eve dans le Paradis Terrestre, & fit tomber Adam: sans quoi le mystere de la Rédemption n'auroit pû s'accomplir. Ainsi les Histoire Sacrées, prises à contresens, ont donné cours aux superstitions les plus folles & les plus étendues (I, 94).

Apparently, they, he is trying to tell us that the Hebrew tradition in this matter is older than those of the Phoenicians and Egyptians, to whose serpent-stories he has just referred in the preceding paragraph. But surely there is some mistake?

Des not the Histoire critique speak of both the Phoenicians and Egyptians before the Hebrews? If we take account of this, the whole thing must be reversed, and we secretly conclude that the Jews derived their Serpent from Egyptian and Phoenician legends and emblems. Moreover, if the Hebrew Serpent is not the original, what happens to the mystery of Redemption, which (as he goes out of his way to say) depends on the Hebrew story? Does that mystery lose its significance ? When we come to know the critical history of philosophy better, we shall have no hesitation in answering such questions in the affirmative. Finally, the matter of the common origin of such languages as Chaldean, Armenian (Syriac), Coptic, Arabic and Celtic is introduced in the Histoire critique to show that the Hebrew tongue is not anterior or superior, but, like these, a dialect of the antediluvian mother-tongue (cf. Encycl., art. Langue Hébraïque); and it is suggested that Adam and Prometheus, who both disobeyed divine commands and suffered the consequences, were one and the same person. Once again, then, we come upon the notion that Adam was not an individual, but an idea, emblem, symbol or (as in the Extrait) an epithet.(v. H.c., I, 214-216).

These parallels all involve passages located in the first two volumes of the Histoire critique, which were presumably composed before the third (although they appeared together in 1737) and may have been written long before the actual date of publication. So we may well wonder whether the two Extraits and those first two volumes should be regarded as representing a definite phase in the development of Deslandes's thought. We must also place on record the fact that our author never loses his enthusiasm for Burnet. Indeed, in the Recueil de différens traités of 1750 (pp. 43-45), it is still to the former Master of the Charterhouse that the writer appeals as he criticizes a work called L'Antiquité expliquée & représentée en figures: observing that "ces pierres sont une suite & un effet des bouleversemens que la terre a soufferts par ce grand nombre de déluges de tremblemens...", he proceeds to quote from the Sacred Theory.[34]

The significance of the Mazarine MSS as a whole may now be assessed at last. In the first place, as it was presumably composed after the rather frivolous and slight Réflexions and Art de ne point s'ennuyer, it represents the first serious essay into that philosophy that was to emerge in the mature writings, and especially in the Histoire critique de la philosophie. In other words, it is an important intermediary or link between the early and the mature periods of our author's philosophic evolution. Already, in this MSS, under the mask of deference, we have an insidious process of sapping the foundations of the miraculous and the supernatural; the application of secular criteria and, in particular, an attempt at "scientific", common-sense approach to the documents of the Faith. In this connection our author's acquaintance with the work of Spinoza does not escape our notice, for to this aspect of his intellectual growth we must return at a later stage in this study. For Deslandes was apparently unable to reach conclusions that Buffon was to put into his Preuves, namely that "le déluge universel est donc un miracle dans sa cause et dans ses effets" (Oeuv., ed. Flourens, I, 105), and that "le récit de l'historien sacré est simple et vrai, celui des naturalistes est composé et fabuleux" (ibid, p. 106). And, if we read in Buffon that Burnet's "fault" was "d'avoir regardé le déluge comme possible par l'action des causes naturelles, au lieu que l'Ecriture Sainte nous le présente comme produit par la volonté immédiate de Dieu..." (ibid, p. 103), we shall be inclined to suspect that it was this very "fault" that endeared Burnet's Theory to the author of the MSS. The man who preferred to be deliberately exclusive in 1712-1715 begins his MSS extracts with a mention of the "double doctrine" device; and the writer who declared his favour for the "Moderns" in 1715 must have found some support for his views in those of his English model, for J.W. Adamson indicates the influence of the Sacred Theory upon the "Ancients" v. "Moderns" controversy: "An early intimation of a different opinion came from Thomas Burnet...who assumed that there was order

and progress in the growth of knowledge, a modest thesis which Temple regarded as a 'panegyric' of the moderns" (Camb. Hist. of Engl. Lit., IX (1912), p. 390). No attempt to trace the development of Deslandes's philosophic ideas could be complete, then, without a manuscript work which, though it has some relationship with the early prose writings, shows an inclination towards a scientific rationalism of British origin, and leads us on to the more specifically scientific endeavour of 1736 and to important parts of the critical history of 1737.

CHAPTER III NEWTONIAN SCIENCE

Quand l'esprit a été heureusement cultivé par les Belles-Lettres, on doit alors s'appliquer aux Sciences exactes & Philosophiques. & s'y appliquer, non en homme qui recherche des duttes [sic] ou des faits pour se donner dans le monde je ne sçai quel relief, mais en homme éclairé qui veut approfondir les choses & remonter à leurs principes propres & essentiels. En cela, les Sciences Philosophiques sont les seules dignes de l'homme qui pense (Recueil de différens traités &c., ed. 1753, pp. xxi-xxii).

...une étude assidûe des Loix invariables de la Nature... (Rec., ed. 1750, pp. xiv-xv).

a) The Popularizer of Newtonian Principles and Methods

The distance from Burnet and Spinoza on the one hand and Newton on the other was not so great as it may seem to a modern observer. For example, in his article "L'Incrédulité et la pensée anglaise en France" (RHL, 1934), Briggs shows how the "magistrat spinoziste et newtonien", Pérelle, was - under cover of seeming disapproval - imparting Spinozist ideas in his correspondence (art. cit., p. 506). He goes on to show that this same Pérelle, informed by "Kowmte" (Conti), was more than a little interested, not only in Newton's mathematics, but also in the great English thinker's theological notions:

En général il n'estime que les faits, tant en morale qu'en métaphysique et en physique. Il croit aussi que les faits sont le seul fondement de la théologie; il passe en Angleterre pour un grand théologien...Il regarde la Bible comme le plus ancien livre que nous ayons, mal écrit, peu instructif pour l'histoire, et cependant fort retouché par Samuël et Esdras "He believe [sic] that J-C was a man, not God s son, who hath given us a very good Morale..." (Pérelle, cit. Briggs, pp. 510-511).

That this fragment from the magistrate's diary is dated April 1718 is interesting since it establishes contemporaneity with the MSS we have just discussed; and, having noted how it was possible for one French thinker to be "spinoziste et newtonien", we shall shortly proceed to demonstrate how Deslandes was visibly influenced by these philosophies in the mature period of his evolution. Before passing to the all-

important writings of the phase 1737-1756, however, we propose to take some account of his attitude in 1736 towards Newton, the oracle of scientific method in the eighteenth century.

In the first part of our study, we have already listed the activities of Deslandes as a scientific observer during the years 1716-1736. This episode in his career had already begun in London, when, having most probably attended a meeting of the Royal Society and having certainly met Newton, Halley (and perhaps Roger Cotes too), he began to perform some simple experiments. It was in this way that he became initially infected with Newtonian scientific ideas, the supreme expression of which is to be found in the Discours sur la meilleure manière
35
de faire les expériences that precedes the Recueil de différens traités de physique et d'histoire naturelle of 1736. By that date, however, Newton's principles and methods had gradually been imported into France from another quarter. For, although contacts between England and France were increasingly numerous after the Treaty of Utrecht, it is to Holland that we must look for a main source of scientific Newtonianism in the first half of the century.

In the Low Countries the diffusion of Newton's methods was achieved chiefly by three men: Gravesande, Boerhaave and Musschenbroek (v. Brunet, Les Physiciens hollandais et la méthode expérimentale en France au XVIIIe siècle, Ch. I). Circumstances often proved propitious. In 1715, Gravesande travelled to London as secretary to the embassy despatched to felicitate George I on his accession to the English throne. There he met Newton, was made a member of the Royal Society and, after his return to the Netherlands, maintained contact with scientific circles in the British capital. In the same year Boerhaave addressed the Academy of Leyden "de comparando certo in physicis", concluding with a magnificent eulogy of Boyle, Halley and Newton. And whilst Gravesande was busily changing the basis of his teaching from Cartesian vortices to Newtonian attraction, Musschenbroek was working in London

under Newton and Desaguliers, in preparation for a professorial career that was to take him to Utrecht in 1723.

The tremendous enthusiasm for scientific method in Holland was soon to be felt in France, where early in the century obscure savants like Polinière were already performing experiments in accordance with "modern" techniques (Brunet, op. cit., p. 102). Gravesande's Physices Elementa of 1720-21 provoked an immediate reaction in France, especially in the form of hostility from "systematics" like the Cartesian cleric Castel, who tirelessly belittled the renown of Newton and derided the complicated apparatus associated with modern experimentation:

> "Car pourquoi cet attirail d'expériences, de recherches pénibles, de creusets et d'alambics, où, sans prétexte que la Nature veut qu'on lui arrache son secret, on la met sans cesse à la torture, à la question, l'altérant, la déguisant pour la mieux connaître (cit. Burnet, p. 104).

In short, it was the artificiality of proceedure which the Reverend Father found reprehensible. Instead, he would have performed "des observations simples, naïves, faciles"; and he exhorted his reader with the reminder: "c'est la nature, et la nature elle-même, qu'il faut continuellement avoir devant les yeux" (ibid, p. 105).[36] Undaunted by such strictures, in 1724 some of Boerhaave's most devoted admirers in Paris published his lecture courses covering the years 1718-24, under the title Experimenta et Institutiones Chemiae; and, on the strength of his having corresponded for the past fifteen years with Jussieu, in 1731 the Dutch scientist was elected to the French Académie des Sciences. In the following year, Du Fay, the director of the Jardin des Plantes, went to Holland to secure new specimens, and in 1734 sent to the Académie des Sciences an account of Musschenbroek's meteorological observations. Towards 1736, Nollet, who on more than one occasion openly admitted his indebtedness to the Dutch, was making his laboratory famous; and, at Cirey, ~~with~~ the home of Madame du Châtelet who was under the spell of experimental science, Voltaire was soon to depart for Holland, whence he wrote to his friend Thieriot on January 17 1737: "Je suis ~~à~~ venu à Leyde consulter le docteur

Boerhaave sur ma santé, et S'Gravesande sur la philosophie de Newton" (ed. Mol., XXXIV, 200). Indeed, as he wrote to Thieriot again on February 4th of the same year: "Je passe ma vie à voir des expériences de physique, à étudier" (ibid, p. 211) - a statement which is amply justified in the Eléments de la philosophie de Newton of the following year.

Such was the climate surrounding the publication in 1736 of Deslandes's version of Musschenbroek's Latin oration of 1730. How did he come to undertake such a task? We do not know whether he ever visited Holland; and, whilst at one point in his Essay sur la marine & sur le commerce of 1743 (pp. 169-170)he makes reference to the appearance of buildings in Amsterdam as well as to some "singularités de Physique & de Chymie" to be seen in the shops of that city, this is slender evidence on which to base the supposition of a meeting with the great Dutch Newtonian. Perhaps the original suggestion came from Réaumur who, in the Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences (Ann. 1734, p. 229), recommended the study of Musschenbroek's Latin translation of the Tentamina of the Academy of Florence, to which the oration of 1730 served as a kind of preliminary discourse. However, given the availability of Musschenbroek's oration in Latin (the universal and age-old language of the savant), what need was there to translate it into French? The main reason is rather obvious. It is none the less of considerable significance to the student of Deslandes. Let us take note, then that in the Recueil of 1736, as in the Histoire critique of the following year, Deslandes deliberately chose his mother-tongue as the medium of expression; and that he did so in order to persuade readers, other than the specialists, to peruse his writings. On these occasions he ceased to direct his words to the polite and enlightened minority, and chose to speak to the wider, and constantly growing reading-public, composed chiefly of middle-class people who were showing more and more interest in science and philosophy. As Fontenelle had done in many of his works, he set out to be a vulgarisateur.

The second reason is more subtle and less obvious.

"On m'a seulement fourni le canevas: je l'ai rempli & brodé à ma manière", says our author on the second page (note). The oration supplied the back-ground which Deslandes "embroidered" in his own way. The authoritative exposition made by the Dutch savant became the vehicle for a number of "asides" or digressions - a number of journalistic "tit-bits" intended to interest and divert the reader. The whole thing was transformed: it was no longer a learned thesis and it was no longer appropriate to use the learned language. It is therefore clear that the originality of the work emerges mainly in the adornments added by Deslandes, and which one periodical at least considered more significant and more interesting than the sober and sombre back-ground:

> M. Deslandes l'a orné d'exemples & d'observations, qui à mon avis sont préférables aux préceptes du Philosophe Hollandois. Car qui ignore que pour faire des expériences avec succès, il faut des organes qui soient bien disposés, que la raison affranchie des préjugés guide les sens, que les instrumens ayent été faits par un habile Maître, qu'on les employe à propos, & avec les précautions nécessaires...? Il me semble qu'on feroit pas beaucoup de cas de ces maximes triviales, si M. Deslandes n'y avoit point joint des remarques critiques, diverses observations & quelques problèmes Physico-Mathématiques (Obs. sur les Ecr. mod., V (1736), Lettre LXVIII, pp. 170-171)

Flattering as this is to our author, it is a distortion of the facts. Deslandes added little of importance compared with the solid value of the original. Moreover, there can be no doubt at all that he himself would have disagreed with the journalist who, extending the hand of welcome to a brother-"journalist", dared to call Musschenbroek's exposition of Newtonian method a series of "maximes triviales". The few lines we have quoted above suggest that Musschenbroek had laboured the obvious. Deslandes would hardly have agreed with this, and the way in which he himself stresses the arguments of the *a prioristes* shows that he was aware of the strength of the opposition to the "right method". The *Journal des Savants* does not deny the author's claim that his subject is "delicate" and far from exhausted: "C'est de ce Discours [of Musschenbroek] que notre Auteur avoüe qu'il a emprunté non mot à mot, mais avec cette liberté que permet la République des Lettres, les Réfle-

xions qu'il donne sur un sujet qui lui semble aussi délicat qu'il a été jusqu'à présent peu approfondi" (ed. Paris, août 1736, p. 457 A). And if English scientific methods were not readily accepted even in educated society, how much greater was the need for general scientific enlightenment - amongst the country-people, for instance, whom Fontenelle depicts in 1732 as deplorably ignorant of scientific instruments and lamentably prone to superstition: "On auroit peut être peine à croire combien dans ce siècle-ci en France, à trente lieues de Paris, un astronome avec tout son équipage et ses pratiques ordinaires fut un spectacle étonnant...encore aujourd'hui les paysans d'auprès d'Orléans ne peuvent pas prendre une autre idée d'un homme qu'ils voient observer le ciel, sinon que c'est un magicien. Quand leurs vignes ont manqué, ils l'en accusent." (cit. Carré, La Phil. de Font., p. 29)? We may have no doubt about it: the motives that prompted Deslandes to undertake the popularization of Newton's techniques and ideas were roughly the same that prompted Voltaire in 1734 and 1738. The Discours and the Recueil that accompanies it constitute a fighting treatise, directed against ignorance, superstition and academic prejudice.

Yet, since it was a "delicate" subject, one had to proceed with caution; and, more especially, one had to give the impression of impartiality. Consequently, Deslandes begins with a passage of his own ~~composing~~ in which he begs his reader to judge the work with an open mind; and, borrowing from Descartes's Remarques sur les sentièmes objections (Oeuvres, ed. A&T,VII, pp. 488-490) the precept that a rational creature must approach a subject without prejudice, he attempts to forestall the prejudices of the Cartesians. Again, when he arrives at a discussion about the natural principles, he display his "impartiality" by presenting the Peripatetics, the Cartesians and the Newtonians, as it were in the same breath:

> En effet un Disciple d'Aristote les saisit, les apperçoit différement du Cartésien; le Cartésien encore différement de ceux qui suivent les principes de Stahl ou de Newton.37 En-

brasser un Système aujourd'hui, c'est presque se condamner à ne voir les choses que d'un certain biais, & éviter de les voir de tout autre, c'est se mettre sur les yeux un verre teint d'une couleur particulière, sans s'embarrasser si ce verre altérera les objets, ou même s'il les ternira. Il faut donc être délivré de tout parti, avoir secoué toute autorité pour entreprendre de bien faire des expériences (p.3).

Yet, despite this condemnation of "bias" and of "systems", his own affections for Newton appear in the text: on pp. 20-22, he shows how superior to those of Descartes are Newton's ideas about telescopes, and on p. 43 he declares in favour of the vacuum - a fact that is noted with some distaste by the Mémoires de Trévoux which states "nous ne souscririons pas tout-à-fait à un exemple qu'en apporte M. Deslandes, qui paroît partisan du vuide Neutonien" (ed. Paris, Dec. 1736, p. 2625). But, of course, his affections are best demonstrated in the fact that he reproduces step by step the Newtonian precepts declaimed in 1730 by Musschenbroek:

1. Employ instruments to aid the senses
2. Make certain that they are reliable and accurate
3. Pay attention to climatic, geographic and other variable factors
4. Have a definite, objective aim in view
5. Control and repeat experiments
6. Eschew systems and avoid prejudice
7. Have a sound knowledge of the physical world, and of the structure and properties of bodies
8. Be well acquainted with the science of mathematics
9. Shun metaphysical abstractions

As in the case of the Extrait de la théorie sacrée de la terre, it would be tedious to demonstrate how closely Deslandes follows his Latin model. The really interesting and original aspects of the work are to be found in digressions, additions and modifications.

First, we find "autobiographical" digressions, embodying the author's own experience. An excellent illustration is the story of the petites vierges:

M'étant trouvé dans une Province assez distante de Paris, je remarquai que le peuple y ramassoit vers la fin de Juin les fèves ou crysalides, dans lesquelles se transforment les chenilles qui vivent sur la grande ortie, qu'il leur donnoit le nom de petites Vierges, & que les Curés & autres prêtres de la Campagne en ornoient curieusement les autels. Il est vrai que ces crysalides sont de la plus belle couleur d'or, & qu'à les regarder avec de certains yeux, elles offrent ou paroissent offrir tous les traits d'un enfant emmailloté. Cependant la superstition n'en étoit pas moins grossière: & par là même, eus-je peut-être une plus grande peine à la faire cesser. Car le peuple quitte difficilement ces anciens usages, & une raison pour lui d'y demeurer, c'est qu'ils sont anciens.

J'ai réussi pourtant, & une pareille victoire, toute simple & toute philosophique qu'elle étoit, me plût infiniment (pp. 55-56, n.)

Thus a victory was won by the "philosopher" over the ignorant superstition of the peasants and the connivance of the priests. Sometimes a note of grievance is sounded in a digression or additional passage. For instance, note (a) to p. 79 reveals that our author had not forgotten the treatment he had received in connection with the business of le jaugeage des navires. It is a relatively lengthy note, in which he attacks geometricians who theorize on naval matters, who pile up arbitrary suppositions, and who think of their own fame rather than the advancement of naval science. Sometimes the digression is personal only in the sense that it gives the author an opportunity to ride one of his hobby-horses. Thus, to demonstrate that a person's humour can affect his ability to perform experiments and judge their results with an unbiassed mind, he expounds a theory of sympathies and antipathies[38], which, based on an article in Descartes's Passions de l'âme (Oeuvres, A & T, XI, pp. 428-429), is later to become the substance of a monograph in the 1748 edition of the Recueil. In 1736, however, the theory appears in these words:

> On demande quelquefois d'où viennent les Simpathies & les Antipathies; & si les regardant comme vraies, on ne pourroit point leur assigner une Cause réelle & effective. Pour éclaircir cette question qui a sa difficulté, je considére les nerfs, ou les filèts nerveux dans les corps humains, comme si c'étoient autant de cordes tendues, & susceptibles du moindre ébranlement. Ces cordes transmettent à quelque partie du cerveau (on ne l'a point encore déterminée) l'impression plus ou moins vive que les objets extérieurs font sur les sens: & alors l'ame se trouve émue & affectée de telle ou telle modification, qu'il n'est point du tout à son choix de refuser ni même d'affoiblir, pour lui en substituer une autre. Cela étant, si l'on admet deux hommes dont les filèts nerveux soient également tendus, ils s'approcheront d'autant plus volontiers l'un de l'autre, que la même suite d'objets les frappera non seulement, mais les frappera encore du même biais. De-là des goûts, des moeurs, des préjugés analogues: de-là deux hommes à l'unisson. Tout le contraire arrive, quand les nerfs sont inégalement tendus. On se fuit, on se déplait, on hésite à se lier & à s'accorder ensemble (pp. 39-39).

Material indeed for the nineteenth-century eccentric, Charles Fourier! It is not surprising that the author of this digression should, in his conte philosophique Pigmalion, have reached a position quite close to that of La Mettrie in his

Homme-machine. As we have said, this attempt at a purely mechanistic explanation of human affinities, allergies, manners and inclinations (v. Bibl. Fr., XXV, p. 98) is one that he is to revive in 1748. This time he gives examples of allergies: Henri III who could not bear to be in the same room as a cat; Erasmus who developed symptoms of fever at the smell of fish; J.C. Scaliger who shuddered at the odour of water-cress; Tycho-Brahé who paled at the view of a hare or fox; Thomas Hobbes who could not bear to be alone in the dark;[39] Francis Bacon who swooned during an eclipse of the moon; Robert Boyle who had convulsions on hearing water issue from a tap - and numerous other curious cases, of which we find a short list in MSS Nº 6608 in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal,[40] which (since it is not in Deslandes's own hand) appears to have been drawn up from the above- mentioned monograph (Nº IV in the Recueil) by some interested reader. What is to be stressed here is that the insertion of this theory in the Recueil of 1736 is an example of Deslandes's use of the freedom he claims at the outset.

Although most of these digressions can be found to have their inspiration partly in the desire to be useful as well as entertaining, there are some that are more strictly utilitarian in motive. The best example is to be found in a passage referring to a Dutch pump intended to extinguish chimney-fires. Little though this may have to do with Musschenbroek's learned oration, we are told: "Comme j'ai jugé que ces pompes à la Hollandoise pourroient être utiles à Paris & dans les grandes Villes, contre les accidens de feu qui arrivent aux cheminées, j'en ai fait un dessein qui se trouvera à la fin de ce Traité..." (pp. 53-54, n(a)); and in fact at the end of the treatise we do find an illustration showing a fellow using one of these long-barrelled Dutch pumps in such an emergency. Indeed, if we are familiar with Diderot's Encyclopédie, we are reminded of some of the plates at the end of that massive work. In the fourth chapter of the first part of our study we noted that Deslandes's scientific observations and reports in general were concerned with rendering service to the community at large

or to specialized groups within the community; with waging war on ignorance and superstition; and with promoting notions dear to the author himself. It now becomes clear how the digressions and additions we have just noted fit into the wider scheme. For they are inspired by precisely the same ideals and arise out of the same desires.

We have declared more than once that Deslandes's handling of his material is that of the journalist. Sometimes, therefore, he modifies the Latin text, seizing upon a point made by Musschenbroek and turning it into a more positive, and sometimes more "topical" attack upon those who neglect the proper scientific method. For example, Musschenbroek had spoken of "inferior" scientists who, having imitated their idols and having been blind to any errors, distorted their findings to fit preconceived hypotheses: "Horum labore summopere commaculata fuit erroneis observationibus Scientia, plurimumque detrimenti cepit" (Tentamina &c, ed. 1731, p. IX). He had also reproved those who, calling themselves "eclectics" (largely because they availed themselves of the work of others), had strayed from the paths that would have led them to the truth: "Ejusmodi scientiam condiderunt, qui sese Eclecticos professi sunt, qui colligendis aliorum laboribus occupatissimi, nihil ipsi explorarunt, sed omnia vera et falsa inter se imprudenter miscuerunt, atque aliorum autoritatibus innixi, Scientiam a veritate, & a vera Philosophia alienissimam conciderunt..." (bid). It is interesting to note what use Deslandes makes of this opportunity. Speaking in the present tense, he is more precise about the classes of "supposed" scientists. First, there are the prétendus chimistes, seeking to perform some transmutation of metals: "Que cherchent-ils donc? Un esprit universel, une semence métallique, un feu élémentaire, à quoi ils réduisent toute la Physique. Mais qui leur dit qu'il y a dans la Nature un tel esprit, une telle semence, un tel feu? Leur unique recours sera le silence opiniâtrement gardé (p. 40)". Secondly, there are the prétendus méchaniciens, seeking perpetual motion: " Ils

ignorent apparemment que dans toute Machine il y a un centre de gravité commun, autour duquel les différentes parties de cette Machine se trouvent tellement balancées, que leur force vient à s'y réunir toute entière; & quand il arrive que ce centre de gravité est aussi bas qu'il le peut être, sans avoir la liberté de descendre davantage, alors toutes ces parties doivent s'arrêter, il n'y a plus de mouvement" (p. 41). Machines run down, because of the pull of the Earth's gravity - that is the simple answer to such speculations. It is the judgement of a "modern" Newtonian, who is a little impatient with the enemies of progress. Indeed, all the attacks that Deslandes makes on those he calls "charlatans" are of this order.

We repeat that it is a fighting treatise, which, without detracting from the most useful contributions of Descartes himself to the advancement of science, firmly established the author as a Newtonian, who adhered to the notion of the void (pp. 10 & 43), who accepted Newton's optics (pp. 22 &25), and who in the properties of matter included attraction (p.9).[41] And the fact that it was written in French, that it was brief, entertaining and widely readable, that it was designed to render service to mankind, that it had an air of forceful topicality - these things only added to its persuasive power and increased its influence in the eighteenth century.

b) The Importance and Influence of the Discours of 1736

The Discours sur la meilleure manière de faire les expériences had substantial influence upon the development of sound scientific method in eighteenth-century France, and it was of consequence in a number of ways related to the precepts of Newton and Musschenbroek that it embodied.

First, considerable space was devoted in the Discours to the choice, use and control of scientific instruments - a matter which had hitherto had little attention in France. After 1736 the situation was gradually transformed. In 1738 the Abbé Nollet, who was to have a decisive part to play in

making experimentation fashionable about the middle of the century, devoted much of the Preface of his Programme ou idée générale d'un cours de physique expérimentale (which was subtitled: avec un catalogue raisonné des instruments qui servent aux expériences) to discussing the indispensability of such instruments and to the precautions to be taken in using them. And, in the Preface to his Leçons de physique expérimentale (1743), Nollet repeated most of these remarks, pointing out that such apparatus was needed by the savant and amateur alike, and suggesting that it was logical to learn something of the principles on which the instruments worked. He asked: "Est-il possible de voir ces effets admirables des téloscopes, des lunettes, des microscopes, dont l'usage est aujourd'hui si commun, sans desirer d'en connoître la méchanique, & les propriétés sur lesquelles la construction de ces instrumens est fondée?" (ed. 1759, I, p. xl). Moreover, looking further ahead in the century, we cannot ignore the clearest proof of the extensive use of apparatus to which Nollet referred. The wealth of technical detail that accompanies some of the plates in the Encyclopédie representing scientific instruments is a silent tribute to the efforts of men like Deslandes.

Secondly, the purely secular approach of our author is worthy of note; for it was as a rival to the Abbé Pluche's Spectacle de la nature (1732) that the first Recueil must have appeared to the contemporary reader. There are significant differences between the two works. For instance, so intent upon seeing the hand of God in all things had been the "scientific" priest, that he had indulged in some absurd teleological speculation, even venturing to postulate divine benevolence in creating the very ship-eating worms that Deslandes sought to destroy, and contending that without these pests there would be unemployment amongst Scandinavian peoples who were busy supplying wood and tar for the navies of Europe! (op. cit. tr. Humphreys, 1740-48, III, pp. 386-387). On the principle that it was utterly vain to imitate those who,

"à la manière de Platon, s'efforcent d'introduire des idées abstraites & métaphysiques dans l'étude des choses naturelles" (Rec., 1736, p. 86), Deslandes repeatedly stressed the fact that experimental science was a matter of observation, of search by trial and of calculation. Such was the value of the contribution of our author "qui publia sur les méthodes de la science expérimentale le traité le plus clair et le plus lu" (Mornet, Les Sc. de la nat., p. 37).

Thirdly, then, Deslandes's Discours was of significance because of the emphasis that was put upon diligent and careful research and proceedure, upon the repetition of experiments and upon the ceaseless inquiry into Nature, which, alike for Musschenbroek and for his popularizer, was comparable to a watch that one discovered for the first time, wondering how it functioned and investigating it by using all the senses (Rec., 1736, p. 7). As a general rule, hypotheses and conclusions had to wait upon results: as Deslandes himself was to state when he discussed physics in 1756, "Il faut des observations & des expériences pour y réussir, & non de simples raisonnemens" (H.c, IV, 133). It is partly to the credit of Deslandes that such a principle was better-known and more widely accepted after 1750.

Finally, the work of 1736 made a valuable attack upon "systems"; and, whilst Deslandes had declared, and Nollet reinterated in the Leçons de physique of 1743: " il faut avoir une idée exacte de ce qu'on cherche" (Rec., 1736, p. 40; Lec. de ph., I, p. lxxx), this precept did not excuse preconceived ideas about the results of one's labours. "Défions-nous surtout des Auteurs qui ont des systêmes à soutenir", warned Nollet (ibid, I, p. lxiii). Buffon too was to agree with Deslandes in condemning those whose judgements were prejudiced by their allegiance to a particular authority: "Je puis même dire, écrit Buffon, qu'en fait de physique l'on doit rechercher autant les expériences que l'on doit craindre les systêmes... C'est exactement le langage de Deslandes" (Mornet, op. cit., p. 109). Thus, in more respects than one, "le grand physicien

Musschenbroek, Deslandes qui le vulgarise, Buffon commentant l'Anglais Hales s'accordent pour fixer clairement la méthode et tracer aux sciences naturelles du XVIIIe siècle les destinées qui seront fécondes" (ibid, p. 110).

Even by 1748, Deslandes was glad to recognize some progress in the adoption of ideas he had recommended: "Si l'on considère l'état où est aujourd'hui la Physique devenue claire & nette, absolument dégagée des qualités occultes des premiers Disciples d'Aristote, & du langage inintelligible des Scholastiques, on verra qu'elle ne demande que des faits, des observations, peu de conjectures, surtout des raisonnemens décisifs, & qui aillent au but" (Essay sur la marine des anciens, ed. 1768, p. xvii). If the Cartesians were not absolutely confounded, at least the Scholastics had been silenced - surely that was some reward for one who had done so much to demonstrate the value of experimental science.

What, in fact, did he consider to be the functions of science? Certainly to provide knowledge about the Universe; certainly to serve the whole world by supplying such useful information as Maupertuis and his party brought back from Polar regions (Rec., ed. 1753, p. xvii); certainly to serve one's own nation by discovering and showing how to exploit natural resources (Rec., ed. 1748, p. xx; cf. Mollet, Lec. de ph., I, p. 1). And in 1748 Deslandes stated that he had composed his work "pour servir utilement le public" (Rec., p. iii), just as in 1753 he was to express the desire to "être utile au public" (Rec., p. xxiii). We recall, however, one further aim - more vital than technical knowledge; and to this he returned in 1750:

> Un autre avantage que procure la Physique, c'est de nous préserver de l'Athéisme & de la Superstition, que je regarde comme les deux plus grands malheurs qui deshonorent l'humanité. Elle nous préserve de l'Athéisme, en nous faisant remarquer dans tous les objets qui nous environnent, des traces de l'infini, & nous élevant par-là à l'idée de l'Etre infiniment parfait. Elle nous préserve de la Superstition, en étendant nos connoissances & nous dégageant de la frayeur qu'inspirent certains météores: deux choses également nécessaires, tant pour la tranquillité & l'agrément de la vie, que pour éviter

cette admiration stupide qui naît de l'ignorance des effets de la Nature (Rec. ed. 1750, pp. vii-viii).

The joint evils are here presented on equal terms. But, if science was capable of preserving us from these two plagues of the human spirit, a history of philosophy could serve that purpose more effectively still. More especially it could be harnessed to the task of dispelling superstition which - a mere six years later - the same author was to depict as more harmful to society than "peaceful" atheism. For it was in the last volume of the Histoire critique de la philosophie (p.44) that he chose to lay before his readers this opinion culled from the works of Francis Bacon: "La Superstition furieuse dans ses principes & sanguinaire dans ses effets, trouble la paix des Etats où elle se répand...: l'Athéisme au contraire retiré en lui-même, ne cause aucun de ces maux & vit tranquille, laissant les autres vivre de la même manière".

In this passage he was not discussing science, but opinions of the Ancients regarding the nature of the Deity. A principal function of science and philosophy are thus found to coincide. Indeed, the connections between the two had been made quite clear in a Preface published only one year after the Discours of 1736. In the first volume of the critical history our author speaks of "L'Histoire de la Philosophie, qui renferme tant de richesses, & des richesses si différentes, qui développe en quelque sorte les secrets impénétrables, & l'intelligence même du souverain Arbitre de la nature, qui nous apprend par des observations sûres, à n'être point éblouïs de l'éloignement prodigieux & de la grandeur des corps célestes; qui nous multiplie, pour ainsi dire, en mettant sous nos yeux toutes les merveilles & toutes les singularités qui se trouvent dans les diverses parties de l'Univers, qui nous fait connoître enfin quel est le caractère des principaux objets qui nous environnent, & en quelle proportion ils se trouvent avec nos sens, afin que nous puissions rechercher les uns comme par une espèce d'instinct, & éviter les autres. Voilà en gros l'idée que je me suis formée de la Philosophie" (pp. iii-iv).

We hardly need to be told that this was written by the same person as the passage from the 1750 Recueil ~~from~~ which we quoted a few seconds ago: such phrases as "objets qui nous environnent", the word "éviter" and the references to meteors and heavenly bodies speak for themselves. Of greater significance still, however is his conception of "philosophy" in the Preface of 1737. It is obviously wide enough to embrace the whole of natural science. It is obviously an immense unity. Consequently no link needed to be forged between the study of natural phenomena and the study of man's intellectual development. In the works composed in the years 1736-37 science and the history of ideas are fused into a single concept with enormous bearing.

PART III NOTES

1. v. Pt. I, n. 34 & 39.

2. v. Pt. I, n. 31.

3. v. Hayward, The Letters of Saint Evremond, (editor), ed. 1930, p. 306, n. 4: "After she had given up 'the little Palace' in Saint James's, the Duchess, after a short residence in Kensington Square, moved into Paradise Row, Chelsea, in 1694... The Duchess, it seems, occupied № 4, her name appearing on the rate-lists, generally as a defaulter in respect of payment from 1695-99, the year of her death. Paradise Row was pulled down in 1906...".

4. v. Pt. I, n. 46.

5. v. Pt. I, n. 26 & Pt. II, n. 28.

6. Boyer traces this judgement to Saint-Evremond. v. Lettre du Traducteur à l'Auteur, Engl. tr. of Réflexions &c, 1713.

7. (Birch MSS 4283) "Je vous prie de vouloir bien m'envoier un exemplaire de Caton traduit en françois & de faire souvenir Mr. Sylvestre qui me l'a promis." v. another letter to same person, Sept. 1713 (date obscured in MSS): "J'ai reçu la tragédie de Caton que M. Boyer m'a envoyée".

8. This play in which Boyle was ridiculed was most probably Shadwell's Virtuoso (1676), in that the character of Sir Nicholas Gimcrack is clearly a satire on a famous contemporary scientist. e.g.:
Sir N.G.: I am sorry I cannot perform the dissection of the Lobster, which I promis'd. My Fishmonger, that serves me for that Operation, has fail'd me: but I'll assure you it is the most curious of all Testaceous or Crustaceous Animals whatsoever.. After Dinner we will have a Lecture concerning the Nature of Insects, and will survey my Microscopes, Telescopes, Thermometers, Barometers, Pneumatick-Engines, Stentoraphonical Tubes, and the like... (in Dram. Works, ed. 1720, I, 349).
The title of the play is in itself a clue to the identity of Sir Nicholas; for Boyle always defined a student of direct observation and an experimental philosopher as a "virtuoso", and was himself the author of a work entitled The Christian Virtuoso. Furthermore, he was the first to introduce spirit thermometers to Britain, the first in this country to use a barometer to measure the height of mountains, and the most illustrious experimenter with "Pneumatick-Engines" (air-pumps).

9. Voltaire's Visit to Engl.n, ed. 1919, pp. 190-191. Ballantyne devotes space to showing that Addison, Swift, Bolingbroke &c. knew little or nothing of Shakespeare, or found him of little merit, and that his plays were not particularly sought after.

10. cf. Voltaire's Essai sur la poésie épique, Ch. II, Oeuvr., ed. Mol., VIII, 317-318: "Ces pièces sont des monstres en tragédie. Il y en a qui durent plusieurs années; on y baptise au premier acte le héros, qui meurt de vieillesse au cinquième; on y voit des sorciers, des paysans, des ivrognes, des bouffons, des fossoyeurs qui creusent une fosse, et qui chantent des airs à boire en jouant avec des têtes de mort. Enfin imaginez ce que vous pourrez de plus monstrueux et de plus absurde, vous le trouverez dans Shakespeare. Quand je commençais à apprendre la langue anglaise, je ne pouvais comprendre comment une nation si éclairée pouvait admirer un auteur si extravagant; mais dès que j'eus une plus grande connaissance de la langue, je m'aperçus que les Anglais avaient raison, et qu'il est impossible que toute une nation se trompe en fait de sentiment, et ait tort d'avoir du plaisir. Ils voyaient comme moi les fautes grossières de leur auteur favori; mais ils sentaient mieux que moi ses beautés...".

11. Some slight tokens of our author's esteem may be found in his early writings. From Jean d'Hénault he "borrows" the poem Avorton in the Pièces plaisantes that go to fillup some editions of the Réflexions (e.g., ed. 1732, p. 233); the authoress (he says) "...me choisit pour être le confident de toutes les impressions qu'elle a reçues de la nature" (L'Art de ne point s'ennuyer, ed. 1715, p. 120).

12. v. Cohen, "Le Séjour de Saint-Evremond en Hollande", RLC, 1926, pp. 63 sqq., cit. Simon, Henry de Boulainvillier, p. 459, n.1: "St Evremond fut le premier Français à s'intéresser à Spinosa et à le désigner sans doute à ses amis de Paris, sinon à Condé lui-même, par l'intermédaire de Déhénault, comme le théoricien de leur libertinage intellectuel".

13. This is cited by Janet, Les Maîtres de la pens. mod., p. 106, n (1), but the text he uses deviates in many particulars from that of the 1753 ed. v. Bayle, Dictionnaire crit., art. Hénault.

14. v. La Mettrie, Abr. des Syst., (in Oeuv. phil., ed. 1752) p. 15: "Ainsi voilà nôtre dévot Oratorien, Spinosiste sans le savoir...".

15. Pérelle was also associated with Jacques Vergier (Oeuv., ed. 1780, III, 112-113; v. our notes to Pt. I, n. 35, & to Pt. II, n. 24). The Abbé Harenger, the Duc d'Aumont and the Duc de Noailles also figure in the Billets and Entres of V.

16. We consider that Wade makes a better case for Boulainvilliers the Spinozist, than does Mlle. Simon for Boulainvillier [sic], the honnête-homme and humanist; though, of course, he was all three.

17. It is an interesting fact that, at the end of the impious Dîner du Comte de B., Volt finds a quotation to round off part of his argument in the 3rd vol. of Deslandes's Histoire critique de la philosophie (ed. Mol., XXVI, 560).

18. Simon (op. cit, p. 40) speaks of a "commissaire Deslandes" who drew up an inventory of the papers of Boulainvilliers after the latter's demise. This person who travelled to Dieppe for the above purpose was not a naval "commissaire", but a magistrate. We wonder, therefore, if it was our author's brother, Louis who, in 1724, was "docteur-ès-loix" (fam. pap. 634/24/91, v. Pt. I, n. 12 of our study). Perhaps a more acceptable -- suggestion is that he was of a different family altogether - perhaps one of the Deslandes of Norman extraction whose lineage is outlined in B.N. MSS, n. a. fr. 9688, ff. 53-57.

19. For instance, writing to Réaumur in Jan 1721 (Arch. Ac. Sc.) he expresses regret at not having been able to get through to Paris recently, but adds the remark that he hopes to do so next month. In Paris, friends like Fontenelle would perhaps take him along to meet some of the coterie Boulainvilliers.

20. In making comparisons of hand-writing, we are aware that no man achieves the regularity of a machine. Consequently, there are often several styles of the same letter, even within the script of any one period of his life. For example, in the brief letter of Aug. 7 1713 to Desmaizeaux, there are two quite different capital A s in three lines, and two dissimilar T s as well. None the less, if we concentrate on the commoner styles, we find that the MSS coincides with the more casually and hastily composed writings (esp. the Birch MSS letters); and that the 2nd p. of the letter of Sept 14 1713 and scribbled instructions to Desmaizeaux on the outside of the 4th letter give the best parallels. Conversely, however, both the Birch MSS letters and the Mazarine MSS are difficult to compare with the rounded script of carefully written mémoires (like the one on faugère) or carefully written letters (like those to Réaumur and Bignon)- even though (with the exception of the

letters to Bignon) all are from roughly the same period. After this preamble, we turn to the Mazarine MSS (hereafter MM) and the Birch MSS letters (BM, 1, 2, 3, 4, according to dates: Aug. 7, Sept. 14, Sept. ?, Oct. 26, 1713). Note the small a and b in arabe (MM, pp. 15, 22), and compare with same letters in Arabicae and Arabia (BM, I, P.S.), remarking the tendency to break between the first two letters and after b . Compare the initial letter of Burnet and Bethel (MM, pp. 105, 11) with Bignon (BM, 2). Small d s are always of Greek type, generally causing break. Capital D s are nearly always identical with Des Marais (BM, 3). Initial E of Eve (MM, pp. 3-5) is that of Ernenii (BM, 1, P.S.). The ff in difficultés (MM, p. 22) are those in Buffier (BM, 3). The G of Genese and Globe (MM, pp. 33 & 88)is that of Ganeau (BM, 2). The sweeping stroke of g is found in all Desl'hand-writing (e.g. vulgaires (MM, pp. 3-4) & campagne (BM, 1) coincide in this respect). Compare the whole word histoire in MM, p. 3 and BM, 1.. Note identity of I in MM, pp. 10 & 18, and BM, 3; and of L in MM, p. 3,and Lintott and Longepierre (BM, 1 & 3). Observe also identity of M in Moyse (MM,passim) and Monsieur (BM, passim); and P in Paradis (MM,passim) and in Proverbia (BM,1). The letter r is significant too: note tendency to small downward curve followed by sharp upward stroke to meet following letter. The small v is consistent throughout both documents, in which we also remark identical method of forming the "knotted" x in MM (passim) and in capital X of Xerxes (BM,4). The Mazarine MSS is hastily written and for this reason, we repeat, is best compared with the letters to Desmaizeaux. The similarities we have indicated are, if taken with the use of pseudonym M. D***, with a climatic reference we shall take note of later, with the author's interest in Burnet in the 1st vol. of the Histoire critique of 1737, sufficient to justify our attribution. But we would add that, even if the Mazarine MSS were not in Deslandes's own hand, the fact would not imply disproof of our supposition, since copyists were common enough at the time.

21. Mlle. Simon tells us that Bayle and Malebranche appreciated some of Burnet's ideas (op. cit, p. 371, n. 45).

22. Burnet's Theory should be viewed in its place amongst analogous works devoted to the Flood and to inferences that may be drawn from the discovery of fossils:

1680 Telluris Theoria Sacra

1695 Woodward, A Natural History of the Earth - universal Deluge explains marine fossils in geological strata.

1695 Whiston, Theory of the Earth - Deluge effect of comet.

1715 Bouguet, Dissertation sur les pierres figurées -

1748 Maillet, Telliamed &c.- mountains formed by marine currents. Mass of water disappeared as Earth approached Sun. Earth will one-day be destroyed in universal conflagration.

1749 sqq. Buffon, Disc. sur l'hist de la théorie de la terre - ocean-bed displaced, and ocean covered Earth for long period, leaving residual deposits, in form of fossils &c.

23. v. Ducros, Les Encyclopédistes, ed. 1900, p. 236: "...c'est en 1680 qu'un savant géologue, Burnet, démontrait dans un livre hardi (Telluris sacra theoria), que l'histoire de la création d'après Moïse est contraire à la raison et doit être considérée comme une pure allégorie".

24. v. present work, Pt. I, n. 43.

25. v. Voltaire, Oeuvres, XXVI, 210-211.

26. Walton also appears in the H.c. I, 58 & 61. The Prolegomena are mentioned and he is quoted on the question of Mexican inscriptions.

27. v. n. 24 above.

28. v. present work, Pt. III, n. 33 and text.

29. cf. Boulainvilliers, cit. Simon, Henry de Boulainvillier, p. 261, n. 23: " Il y a bien de l'apparence que le commandement si magnifique Fiat lux! ne se rapporte pas à la lumière de façon qu'elle en ait reçu l'existence, mais bien à l'espace de l'atmosphère qui fût alors éclairé pour la première fois après l'éloignement des obstacles qui empêchaient auparavant le cours qu'elle doit avoir...Comme nous avons donc vu ci-devant que la première résidence des élément grossiers ne s'est pu faire sans que l'air et l'étendue supérieure soient devenus pénétrables à la lumière, il est aisé de concevoir aussi qu'à proportion que cette résidence s'est perfectionnée, la lumière s'est multipliée dans cet espace, auparavant ténébreux jusqu'à ce qu'enfin la face des cieux ait été découverte et que la superficie de la terre ait été frappée immédiatement des rayons des grands luminaires et de ceux de tous les astres, c'est là proprement ce que je conçois de l'histoire du 4e. jour de la création, ne pouvant m'imaginer que Moïse ait voulu dire que la lumière auparavant vague et indéterminée ait été alors seulement renfermée dans le soleil". It is significant that this MSS too is in the Mazarine.

30. Voltaire makes no secret of the fact that Burnet and Scripture cannot be reconciled. Exercising common-sense, he dismisses the notion that sea-shells found on mountains prove the Deluge, and suggests that they were worn as emblems by pilgrims who dropped one or two as they journeyed along (XXVII, 145-146). In the Dissertation sur les changements arrivées dans notre globe (1746), he rejects the Burnetian idea of the regularity of the antediluvian Earth on the grounds that mountains and rivers flowing as they do at present are obviously part of the great plan (XXIII, 225-226 & 230); and in a n. to the Dialogue du Pégase et du vieillard (X, 206, n. 3) of 1774, he judges that Burnet merely provided "reasoned absurdities" about the Deluge.

31. None the less, Deslandes pays Buffon a tribute in 1750 (Rec. de diff. tr., p. xxxi) - one year after the Histoire et théorie.

32. v. Hubert, Les Sciences sociales &c., pp. 27-44, and esp. p. 42: "La constante humiliation des Israélites est, chez les philosophes, la contre-partie ou le corollaire de la perpétuelle exaltation des Egyptiens".

33. Sarpi was a very independent spirit, and his Hist. of the Council of Trent was tr. by Le Courayer. v. Préclin, L'Union des églises &c., ed . 1928, pp. xii-xiii; 45, n. 145; and 162.

34. This is the work of the illustrious Benedictine sage, Dom Bernard de Montfaucon. "Dix volumes et latin et en français" appeared in Paris in 1719, and a supplement in 1724, consisting of five additional volumes. It was dedicated to the Maréchal d'Estrées (Bouillon, Bibl. gén. des écr. &c., II, 286-288).

35. This and rest of Rec. is summarized in Bibl. rais., XIX (Oct.-Dec. 1737), 458-468.

36. This was precisely the issue in the controversy between the Newtonians and Castel on the question of colour optics, and it forms an important background to Desl.'s Optique des couleurs of 1742.

37. Our author's sympathies for Stahl emerge in H.c., II, 34-37

38. v. Mém. de Tr., ed. Paris, Dec. 1748, pp. 2748-2750, and Locke's Works, ed. 1823, II, 151-152 (Essay, Bk. II, Ch. XXXIII, parag. 7).

39. This example recurs in H.c., III, 339.

40. ff. 38-39. It is headed Exemples des antipathies, and, in the same hand as the MSS itself, there is added beneath the title "Extr. du Livre intitulé histoire naturelle par Mr. des Landes cy-devant Comre gnal de la marine" (This dates the MSS as posterior to 1746, and we suggest that the examples were copied from the Recueil of 1748.) The Arsenal authorities are wrong in cataloguing the MSS under the name of Deslandes without explaining that it is not his work. v. Corr. litt. I, 171-172.

41. cf. Essay sur la marine des Anciens, ed. 1768 p. 217. Commenting on a passage from Pliny, Desl. makes a sharp contrast between "un Physicien oisif & accoutumé dans son cabinet à raisonner sur les tourbillons & la matière subtile" and " un Observateur diligent à vérifier les choses par lui-même & sur les lieux". A few pages later he shows how the uniformity of Nature is the basis of experimentation: "Une épreuve qui est suivi d'un succès favorable, conduit naturellement à d'autres épreuves. Quand on sçait que la nature n'agit point par sauts, par des mouvemens brusques & qu'elle suit une certaine analogie, on peut passer d'une espèce à l'autre sans aucune crainte" (p. 296)

PART IV

THE MATURE PHILOSOPHY: THE HISTORY OF IDEAS

CHAPTER I THE SCOPE OF THE HISTOIRE CRITIQUE

Voilà en gros l'idée que je me suis formée de la Philosophie. Son Histoire, à la regarder d'un certain oeil, peut passer pour l'Histoire même de l'esprit humain...(H.c., 1737, Préf., p. iv).

...j'aime mieux, tout bien examiné, être court & judicieux (H.c., IV, 1756, Avert.).

a) The Content

"L'Histoire de la philosophie est l'ouvrage qui a fait et qui soutient la réputation de M. Deslandes", said Raynal (Corr. Litt. I, 128). Of its kind it is not exceptionally voluminous; yet it is our author's most substantial work.

At the beginning his anxiety to show the antiquity of philosophy leads him to use the phrase: "Elle est née...avec le monde". Thus by the word "philosophy" he means a technique of observation and explanation, and not the elaboration of formal systems. The degree of man's penetration into Nature's secrets has always depended on two things (we are told): on interest and ability; and thinkers of any age are not to be despised, provided they were moderate in their opinions and rendered service to society. Thus, at the very outset, he seeks to rehabilitate the barbarians, who were true "philosophers" because they followed the guiding light of reason and proclaimed spontaneous notions of natural law. What is more - and here he lays before us ideas to which he returns again and again in the work - respected and consulted by rulers, they made it a point of honour to tell them the truth as they saw it.

From the extreme respect in which "philosophers" were held, it is an easy step to the notion of a double doctrine, "l'une de parade...l'autre de réserve" (I, 17), and to the ancient conviction that mankind in the mass "ne paroissoit pas propre à regarder fixement la vérité" (I,18). The "philosopher" and the ruler could share the secret truths, but fraternization with the plebs was not countenanced.

Having thus made it clear that the sages of ancient times were useful to the state, but wise enough not to divulge some of their ideas to the masses, he passes to the doctrines of barbarian philosophers, using a classification borrowed from the Greek geographer, Strabo: Scythians in the North; Ethiopians in the South; Celts in the West; Indians in the East.[1]

It is in the course of discussion of the northern group that he supplies a long extract from Thomas Burnet's Sacred Theory, relating it to Scythian notions that the best philosophy came from northern climes; and recalling that, in Burnet's book, Terrestrial Paradise is located in the Arctic. There follows a detailed account of Burnet's explanation of the Flood. Then, after a brief tribute to the Gymnosophists of Ethiopia who were the first to discover that the Moon is not of itself luminous, he discusses hieroglyphic writing, the music of ancient peoples, and the philosophy of the Celts with its crucial doctrine of palingenesis. Finally, he treats of oriental thinkers: Chinese, Indians, Persians, Chaldeans, Egyptians &c. His review of some of the Chinese sects is particularly arresting, since the historian goes out of his way to demonstrate that the basis of their theology was a kind of deism, or even of materialism, not unrelated to the later Manichean doctrines. In fact his account of Chinese beliefs leads to a significant survey of the whole vast subject of Nature, God and matter, which appears to be an attempt to stress the unity and balance of Nature. Another digression that is an early proof of our author's habit of following his own interests and inclinations when the temptation is at all strong, is to be found in his remarks on the Phoenicians, who are praised for their knowledge of navigation and naval warfare. Similarly, in the course of his observations about the Brahmins of India, he speaks - probably from personal experience in childhood - of the curious mortifications indulged in by these holy men. But (significantly enough, if we recall the first chapter of our biographical section) he proceeds to speculate about the origins of all

religious ceremonial, and to explain the Brahmins' insistence on concealing the full truth from the common people. He passes on to the worship of stars and of fire. This he finds amongst the Ancient Hebrews too; and notes that those who try to explain the Bible rationally find themselves in agreement with Saducees in the matter that angels are but personifications of divine activity. He informs his reader that the Egyptians had fables concerning Creation and the Flood, but little sound knowledge of the rudiments of natural sciences. Above all Deslandes stresses the fact that the philosophers of Egypt concealed the full truth in hieroglyphic symbols.

He returns to the Bible ("source of all that is necessary in doctrine and to conduct"), pointing out the folly of associating the Scriptures with natural philosophy. Intended for the ignorant as well as the learned and destined to bring men to God by fear and love, the Bible is in conflict with experience and the scientific conception of Nature; and he insinuates that even Christ, dedicated to the task of revealing only as much truth as is necessary to salvation, accepted the possibility of error in other directions and insisted that man should not have too much faith in reason. But, if Christ is presented sympathetically, the Jews are definitely depicted as an unintellectual race, whose Old Testament proves that the myth of the "Chosen People" was fostered to keep the Hebrews in proud obedience to their own leaders. Deslandes opposes the Judaic notion of specific divine intervention; he finds superiority in theories of matter which humbler peoples were evolving in their primitive ways; and he makes it clear that Judaism erected a barrier between the Hebrews and contemporary civilizations. In the section relating to Creation, alternatives to the Mosaic teaching are given prominence - especially the "single substance" theory, with its modern revival in the philosophy of Spinoza. The Flood is discovered in the literatures of many ancient peoples; andthe name of Deucalion is twice mentioned. Moreover, it is suggested that Hercules and Noah were perhaps one and the same person. On scientific matters the wisdom of So-

lomon is held to be very limited; for it was not until the Jews mixed more freely with other nations that they evolved rudiments of what our author calls "philosophy". He discusses the Pharisees, Saducees and Essenes, concluding with an observation he makes several times in his history: thinkers who exaggerate ethical principles degrade human freedom, whereas more accommodating moralists allow a greater measure of free-will. Another recurrent theme is heard when he speaks of the secret doctrines of the Jewish cabala; but he argues that this obscure theology is not the original oral doctrine and is vastly inferior to it. The general conclusion is that the Jews alone ascribed their fixed opinions to a divine source, whereas, relying one reason, other nations were less dogmatic about their ideas and the origin of their beliefs. At this point revelation and reason are sharply distinguished as sources of knowledge about the nature of things.

Continuing his allusions to the Old Testament, Deslandes points the connection between barbarian fables and biblical stories; and he certainly treads dangerous ground when he proceeds to show that the names of Hercules, Zoroaster and even of Jupiter were really surnames applied to heroic, wise or regal persons. He returns to the subject of Creation, claiming that barbarian philosophers, envisaging neither creation nor annihilation, postulated the formation of the Earth. This observation prompts him to mention Whiston and Thomas Burnet as modern exponents of this Barbarian philosophy; after which he explains how the ancient notion of formation led to the theory of revolutions or transformations of the Earth, to the idea of a Grand Year and the interregnum (when Jupiter was idle and indifferent). Once again he finds in the earliest thinkers the notion of the "single substance", from which Spinoza was to derive his first principles. To these ancient and modern conceptions of matter he adds the ancient theory about good and evil - the doctrine of the Two Principles which he treats on the whole sympathetically and at great length.

Book Two initiates a review of Greek thought, beginning with the fabulous philosophy and the Seven Sages of Greece. Hellenic thought is depicted as the rightful heir to the wisdom of Phoenicia, Syria, Egypt and Chaldea, and as proudly disdainful of Hebraic doctrines. He proposes to divide his survey into two sections, or two epochs, respectively preceding and following the establishment of philosophic sects. Euhemeristic presentation characterizes the first epoch. He reveals that the Chaos of Greek poetic philosophy is not unknown in modern English astronomy, and that the Orphic concept of universal fecundity (symbolized in the famous egg) may be connected with a passage in Genesis and with a curious ecclesiastical custom. Furthermore, the efforts of certain authors to associate Homeric and Hebrew thought is not seriously refuted. Thus it is hinted, first, that the Jews were not the fountain-head, and secondly, that there is no need to postulate a divine source of such ideas.

Further discussion of the Seven Sages affords the opportunity for an explanation of what is meant by a "wise" man: he is well-behaved, circumspect, diligent and observant; he seeks felicity away from the tumult of high society; he moderates his desires and lives according to his own nature. Our author's subsequent treatment of the lives of the Seven Sages permits him slyly to disclose his own opinion on statecraft and the dispensation of justice. More important still: Pherecydes' doctrine of the immortality of the soul leads to a twenty-page discussion, during which the Ancients are shown to have had little rational basis for such a belief. Prudently, he concludes that only the Cartesian separation of extension and thought supplies a premise for rational acceptance of the doctrine. It is none the less hinted that even Descartes could not get very far with reason alone.

The history of Greek philosophic sects begins the second volume, at the outset of which Deslandes makes it clear that he is judging pragmatically - that is, by ethical values. It is also clear that he is seeking precursors of modern scientific authorities. Thales, mathematician and primitive scientist, hylozoist and materialist, as well as a sound moralist, was mistaken about a number of things. On the whole, however, he is to be esteemed as the precursor who indicated the right roads that other might follow. Of his disciples, Anaxagoras was outstanding. He too is generously treated in the Histoire critique, if only because of the Homoeomeria which find echoes in modern physics. Pythagoras is treated to a similar apology. The excellent numerical method of studying and denoting musical sounds (which survives to some extent to-day) is approved, even if other numerical speculations were carried to ridiculous extremes by his over-zealous admirers. If we find his allegorical language obscure, it is because he contracted this habit from the Egyptians: if his animist notions of the "soul of the world" and of metempsychosis are not very easy to understand, at least we recognize a primitive germ and note analogies between certain aspects of his system and the philosophy of Spinoza. Finally, the author acknowledges in Pythagorean thought the principle of heliocentricity that anticipates modern views of the Universe.

By the time Socrates enters the pageant, it is clear that order and method have really become established in the business of philosophizing. Diverse idiosyncrasies are explained away by Deslandes, and even the famous "demon" is portrayed as an esoteric joke. Those enemies of the great thinker, the Sophists, are scourged by our critical historian before being summarily dismissed. The excellence of Socrates is evident in the stress that he laid on ethics," la seule Science qui nous est utile, & qui de plus est à notre portée.." (II, 130), and in his refusal to be dogmatic about metaphysical issues. Finally, the historian reminds us that, like other

"prétendus Sages du Paganisme", Socrates, whilst urging men to observe the rites of the national religion, was none the less accused of impiety. The writer's whole treatment of this matter can be regarded as a plea for tolerance to be extended to those who, though holding views different from those in authority, commit no crime against the state.

When our historian arrives at Stilpon of the Megara school he takes the opportunity of returning to the now familiar theme of esotericism, employing on this occasion the phrase "double système". This consistsof "l'un de parade & à l'usage de la multitude qu'il falloit souvent tromper; l'autre de réserve & qu'il communiquoit à peu de personnes, aux amis seulement qui l'entendoient à demi-mot" (II, 161). Aristippus, who follows, is honoured for his work upon the sensations, and particularly for theories about interpretation of sense-impressions,and the notion that, even if the Universe were to be destroyed, "nous pourrions encore être modifiés comme auparavant" (II, 168). His ethical system, dependent upon this view of the sensations, is favourably presented because it promotes voluptuousness. Nevertheless, when (referring to Gassendi) the historian contrasts the "Volupté debout" of Aristippus with the "Volupté assise" of Epicurus, the balance is, we feel, slightly weighted in favour of the latter. The Cynics, who preached moral severity to all and sundry, are treated with disdain and even hostility: "on sera... plus disposé à exclure les Cyniques du rang des Philosophes, qu'à les y retenir" (II, 187). Our author also seizes the chance of disclosing that some Fathers of the Church were in sympathy with the unnatural principles of this sect, and that some monastic orders, as well as some fanatics and heretics, have at times come close to it in their outlook.

Discussing Plato, the critical historian does not hesitate to draw attention to his many short-comings. Indeed, there is little of the panegyric about the paragraphs devoted to this illustrious thinker of old. Yet, he pays tribute to the Platonic notion of an invariable being (God) and of

variable beings (men); and he reveals some affection for a "second cause" (Necessity or Fortune), not dependent on God but capable of being utilized by the Deity (v. La Fortune, 1751). Plato is reproved for obscurity in explaining the constitution of elements, for ignorance of physics and anatomy; and, in more general terms, for a "splendid" system erected on foundation some of which were decidedly shaky. Of the supposed link between Hebrews on the one hand and Greek philosophers on the other he makes complete nonsense at this point, declaring that the Jews were too isolated and too ignorant of philosophy to be imitated by Hellenic thinkers. However, what we know as Plato's "trinity" was known even to "les plus anciens Législateurs", and, in triangular representation, to the Hebrews also. The considerable space devoted to the doctrine of the Trinity, is surely a sly attempt to situate the Christian mystery within its historical context and to deprive the Christians of exclusive rights to its possession.

Although, in fact, he devotes relatively little space to Aristotle, he does promise to treat him fairly. First, as a moralist, Aristotle deserves some respect, despite the fact that metaphysical propositions tend to spoil his ethical notions; secondly, as a logician, he is more admirable, since he establishes the art of reasoning even when he is wordy and obscure; thirdly, as a scientist Aristotle is accused of not distinguishing between the actual and the hypothetical, and of confusing the natural and the supernatural. Above all, it is regretted that pre-Socratic notions of the eternity of matter were replaced by Aristotle ~~by~~ with that of generation and corruption, and that involved ideas about substances should have furnished the Scholastics with so much potential obscurity. In restrained praise of Aristotle, he claims that he "suit assez le fil de la Nature..." (II, 287); that he speculated skilfully about meteors, rainbows and the direction of the wind; and that his conceptions of zoology and botany were not without merit. The greatest defect in Aristoteleanism is that

it "accoutume peu-à-peu à se passer de l'évidence" (II, 290). At the end of the chapter devoted to Aristotle he pauses to consider Strato; and, whilst he professes to refute this thinker on the grounds that the idea of extension is essential to any sound concept of matter, he none the less concedes that Stratonic materialism is "séduisant", and indeed widely accepted under other names (in China, for example).

The Eleatics are not (our author states) to be dismissed merely because they expounded unconventional ideas. For instance: Xenophanes cursed idolaters - that is to his credit: the same philosopher considered there were more misfortunes than joys in life - that was a sound observation. The Eleatics envisaged only one substance in the Universe, and in that they concurred with the Chinese sect of Foë. Again, the sound doctrines of Parmenides concerning ideas and their origin are related by our author to the abstruse Malebranchist "vision in God". Some of these philosophers are deemed to have carried their ideas to extremes: Melissus, the complete atheist, is confronted with the spectacle of an ordered Universe as a proof of God's existence. Similarly, the notion of universal "nothingness" put forward by Zeno the Eleatic, however ingenious, is dismissed as metaphysically nonsensical. Yet Leucippus is honoured as the author of the corpuscular philosophy (admitting a void and atoms); and the modifications introduced by Democritus (and later handed on to the Epicureans) are noted without adverse comment, especially the idea that, because it is composed of atoms, Nature participates in the spiritual and divine endowment of the atom. Democritus believed also in the plurality of worlds and considered human beings as essentially foolish. These ideas are presented sympathetically by the historian. Heraclitus, who regarded fire as the principle of things, is judged obscure but not absurd; and it is hinted that Plato perhaps acquired from him the doctrine of the pre-existence of the Word.

We pass on to Epicurus, so often misunderstood by his critics. Beginning with a marginal reference to Gassendi, Deslandes sets about his task of showing the real Epicurus. The Greek philosopher could not believe that the gods participated in the affairs of this imperfect world; yet he worshipped regularly in the temple, because he wished to promote social harmony, felicity and toleration. (In fostering these last-named desiderata he is comparable with the early Christians.) It is said, of course, that Epicureans aimed at pleasure. Our author sees nothing reprehensible in that, for it is the abuse of hedonism that is to be frowned upon. And, since happiness cannot always be the lot of human beings who must bear some inconveniences in the cause of the general scheme of things, man should learn to submit with fortitude to unavoidable suffering and to live according to his "faculties". Atomism appealed to Epicurus, because it explained the physical Universe so successfully; he accepted the idea of plurality of worlds; he considered that life is a union of atoms and death a disunion in which nothing is actually destroyed. Such ideas (incorporated later in the contes philosophiques) are presented without hostile criticism by the historian. The same can hardly be said of his remarks about the clinamen - a poor attempt at solving the problem of human free-will - or of Epicurean optics, which modern science has improved upon. But the historian who, in 1719, esteemed Gassendi the moralist above all modern philosophers does not hesitate to give full approval to Epicurean ethics, which most satisfactorily reconcile the claims of body and soul and most successfully engender harmony and good-fellowship.

Next he discusses Pyrrho - like the atomists, heir to the Eleatic legacy. To this sceptic "good" and "evil" are human definitions: "ce bien & ce mal ne subsistent que dans leur imagination" (II, 366). As in the Réflexions (ed. 1732, p.35), he goes on to say that for Pyrrho life and death were a matter of indifference, and to commend such an attitude to his readers. He even appears to praise Pyrrhonism, because doubting one's

"natural lights" may turn man towards religion - the simple religion, stripped of all accretions. Consequently he is favourably disposed towards the Hypotyposes of Sextus Empiricus (of which he provides a substantial summary), since they support our author's views about human limitations and about the desirability of "living for one's self".

Summing up the impressions of the Greeks he has formed up to this point, Deslandes now craves indulgence for thinkers who showed the right road to modern philosophers and had the courage to travel that road themselves in the quest of truth. He also attributes the decline of Greek philosophy to loss of originality; to disputes and subtle reasoning that exiled commonsense and impeded sound debate; to trouble outside and within the frontiers of Greece. Discussing what he calls Hellenic "theology", he states that this subject is really concerned with revelation and with grace, which pagans did not accept. He is careful, moreover, to explain that, though revelation is not opposed to reason, the two occupy two distinct provinces. Consequently we must neither exclude reason nor exclude everything but reason. Real "philosophy" (he declares) began with Christ, and we cannot rightly compare barbarian and Christian ethical notions.

This pious submission forms the preliminary to a review of the Stoics, who have sometimes been compared with the Christians. Such a comparison is hardly to be entertained.- Zeno was proud, austere and insensible: his ethics were therefore distasteful to the ordinary person, and should have been particularly disliked by pagans who had no sound belief in the immortality of the soul. His conclusion on this issue is that in pre-Christian times the ethic most suitable to society was "une Morale douce & accommodée aux différens besoins de la Société" (II, 406). He is nevertheless indulgent towards certain Stoic ideas. For instance, although he asserts that Stoic fatalism "refutes itself", he tends to demonstrate how reasonable it appears; and he does not contradict the notion that moral and

physical evil are necessary to the universal scheme. In Stoic philosophy Deslandes also finds an idea which anticipates an important feature of Spinozism, namely that God and Nature are the same thing and can therefore be regarded as aspects of the same substance. Finally, he proceeds to show how the rigidity of Zeno's doctrine (and particularly the tendency to deny that suffering is a misfortune) was repudiated by later devotees of the Stoic philosophy.

As a result of the conquests of Alexander the Great (with which the Sixth Book begins), the city of Alexandria found itself the metropolis of an empire, with an emperor (Ptolomy) who encouraged the arts and sciences. Yet, cherished as they were, the philosophers of this capital city did little but paraphrase and comment and pay court to the ruling <u>clique</u>. The Hebrews of this city learned from the Egyptians the art of allegorical explanation and elaboration, which they unfortunately applied to the Holy Scriptures.

The third volume takes us on to Roman philosophers. Rome, he declares, owed its beginnings to an unruly troop of debauchees and brigands: yet he appears to approve of the fact that, about the time of Romulus, Roman thinkers disdained the poetic theology of the Greeks. He then discusses the feeble and spasmodic attempts of these thinkers themselves and their successors to evolve philosophic systems, pointing out that the Latins were supremely interested in the art of making war and in proclaiming their patriotism. It was not until the time of Caesar and Cicero that valid philosophy came to Rome. Yet, just as Lucretius' <u>De Natura Rerum</u> does not escape his censure,[2] the works of Cicero are judged to display too much vanity and flattery. The Court of Augustus is depicted in glowing colours, for it was there that flourished the love of letters and the cult of Epicurean <u>volupté</u>. Our author consequently regrets that this last-named philosophic ideal was abandoned in later reigns,

when, living under political tyranny, men sought solace in the Stoic way of life. Therefore, much as his sympathies are extended to the victims of persecution, he deplores that amount of attention that had to be paid in such unhappy times to stiffening the moral sinews instead of "investigating Nature's enigmas". There were three outstanding exceptions: first, Seneca, whose austerity "est toute sur ses lévres" (III, 55), composed the Quaestiones Naturales, the metaphysical and geodesic parts of which are inferior to the historical and scientific sections; secondly, Pliny, who waged war on superstition, and who appears as a precursor of modern scientists and natural historians; thirdly, Plutarch, whose Lives he judges to be admirable, but whose other works are often obscured with allegory.

The Seventh Book brings us to Christ, whose advent he hails as the bursting-forth of light upon a world sunk in dilemma and debauch. "Jesus-Christ", he explains," est donc le premier qui ait établi des connoissances sûres & invariables" (III, 77). He notes that, about the time of Christ's coming on Earth, there had sprung up an eclectic philosophy, which, attached to the name of Potamon of Alexandria, he judges to have been eminently reasonable. What is more, he employs this eclecticism to refute those who favour the "Ancients" at the expense of the "Moderns". He returns to his survey of Roman civilization, showing first that the "philosophic" ruler, or at least the monarch who tolerates men of culture and men of letters, is much to be preferred to the tyrant or war-monger; showing secondly that, in general, Roman philosophy was inclined to be superstitious and conventional; claiming thirdly that the ancient, natural religion of Rome was superior to the theurgic nonsense of Egyptian origin introduced by Hadrian. But he insinuates that pagan magic would perhaps have died a natural death if it had not had to compete with Christianity, with its "infinité de prodiges inexpliquables à la raison humaine" (111; 115); and he affirms that the enemies of Christianity did not deny its miracles, but claimed that paganism could show equally

convincing wonders. Furthermore, he discloses how, in order to counter the claims of pagan philosophy, the early Fathers used language intended to outdo rather than to depart completely from its methods of reasoning. Deslandes then proceeds to review in some detail the "rivals" of Christ: Apollonius of Tyana, Apuleius of Madaura. " Je rougis seulement de m'y être arrêté", says the ostensibly penitent historian.

Plotinus, the outstanding exponent of Neo-platonism, is also treated at some length, principally because of the parallels that can be made between certain aspects of his system and Christianity; and his disciple, Porphyrus, is introduced (we suspect) to supply a pretext for informing the reader that the Song of Solomon is really an allegorical account of the alliance between Jehovah and the Hebrews.

The Fathers are shown to have introduced philosophy into simple Christianity. At first Aristoteleanism, felt to be too natural and too "attaché au raisonnement", was neglected in favour of Platonic ideas - more transcendental, mystic and ascetic - but it was to be adopted later by Scholastics who needed its dialectic to save Christianity during the Dark Ages. The doctrine of the Trinity and the Christian teaching about angels are examples of the Neoplatonic influence, by virtue of which the dominant philosophy communicated its "errors" to theology and the Gnostics were able to spoil something that was simple and morally excellent.

From brief remarks concerning heretical opinions about Christ (and particularly regarding his birth and death) Deslandes passes to Origen's view of the eternity of matter and the now familiar "single substance" theory. Enlarging on the subject, he stresses the widespread belief in the materiality of the soul, not only in Ancient philosophy, but also amongst some Fathers of the Church.

The accession of Constantine established Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire, with its metropolis at Byzantium. From this accession too dates the Arian heresy, that brought many disorders. It is at the moment, when he has just

spoken of Julian the Apostate's hatred of the Christians, that our author calls upon a pagan thinker to preach toleration- toleration extended to almost anything except superstition which disturbs society. With the Barbarian Invasions came the fall of the Empire and the decline in the arts and sciences. To the ignorance that then prevailed he attributes the mania for pilgrimages, for Crusades and other activities that stand in sharp contrast to the "inner worship" demanded by the Deity. There was a brief revival of Hellenic thought in Athens; but this city was shortly to be destroyed by the Turks, just as Alexandria was to be sacked by the Persians. Constantinople (Byzantium) too fell to the Turkish invader, and Christendom was subsequently further divided into occidental and oriental branches. To the Eastern branch Deslandes pays homage for preserving the Greek language and for maintaining the wonderful library at Constantinople at a time when, in the Western Empire, the Latin tongue became crude and almost unintelligible and good books were exceptionally scarce.

He next turns to the Arabs. At the outset, we are warned that Mohammedanism is "dangerous" and that its founder was an "imposter"; and we are also made aware that a system of revealed religion is under review - a religion complete with miracles, holy writ, ritual observances, holy water and the like. However, our historian appears to lay stress on the virtuous conduct, the generosity and hospitality of the Muslims, and to point out that their civilization flourished during the times when the Barbarians kept Christendom in darkest ignorance. Again, Deslandes's regard for some features of Mohammedanism causes him to insinuate that the basis of this religion was deism and to reproduce the founder's stricture of idolatrous Christianity. Finally, he gives the Moslems their due as the originators of certain scientific studies and establishers of hospitals and colleges.

The Schoolmen are treated with particular scorn in the Histoire critique, where we read of their stylistic barbari-

ties, their useless wranglings and senseless abstractions. Particularly their unfortunate influence on the development of Christianity is made clear in these pages. For instance, before the time of John of Damascus people tended to go directly to the Scriptures, and Aristotle was banished from Christian schools. After his time it became the habit to indulge in subtle reasoning about miracles and mysteries, and thus to embark upon endless disputation. New doctrines were formulated around such discussions, and the Bible was neglected in favour of commentaries upon it. Rapidly Deslandes outlines the three-fold evolution of Scholasticism and introduces us to some of the disputes between Nominalists and Realists. He also bitterly reproaches Saint Thomas Aquinas with renewing studies that had been banned by Pope Gregory IX, and deplores the decision of 1366 to lift the ban on reading Aristotle. Small wonder, then, that our historian welcomes the efforts of men like Descartes and Gassendi who helped to undermine the Peripatetic edifice. Moreover, the names of Lanfranc and Saint Anselm offer him the opportunity of telling his readers that England has now put aside Scholastic nonsense in order to devote its attention to the exact sciences - all this because of "une précieuse liberté de génie, & l'approbation d'un grand nombre de connoisseurs qui jugent par eux-mêmes, & ne reçoivent point lâchement le ton les uns des autres" (III, 301).

After further criticism of the Schoolmen, he pauses to consider some original and independent thinkers who managed to hold their heads high in a period of conventional thought: Roger Bacon, precursor of modern inventors and scientists; Raymond Lully, who, despite the obscure and often unscientific principles upon which he based his work, helped to promote the study of chemistry; Arnaud de Villeneuve, who confused ethics with science and was (like most of these original thinkers) accused of magic and impiety; Peter of Abano, a medical doctor who dabbled in the occult and tried to reconcile the opinions of different philosophers; Girolamo Cardan, an eccentric

genius, who was thoroughly inconsistent since he combined philosophic boldness with superstitious fear; Paracelsus, an extremist in study and debauch, who confidently claimed to be reforming the study of medicine. In other words, with the possible exception of Roger Bacon, it is a list of rebels against authority who failed to arrive at their respective goals because they were unable to escape the superstition and ignorance that surrounded them.

The fourth volume begins on a new note of increased philosophic temerity, for in the very first page the author (now almost twenty years older than when he published the first three tomes) speaks quite openly of "le Clergé, ardent à nuire quand on n'a pas pour ses opinions la crédule déférence qu'il exige". This Catholic priesthood was the sworn enemy of those who dared to think for themselves. Unfortunately the latter had often (like their persecutors) a tendency to fanaticism. There was Cornelius Agrippa, who incurred the wrath of the Church because he was too outspoken in condemnation of superstition, but whose attachment to the occult led him into "enthusiasm". There was the Abbé Trithème, laudable for his study of ciphers but despicable for his belief in demons. There was Pico della Mirandola, a natural genius who showed too much interest in cabalistic Jewish writers. There was Johann Reuchlin, a Platonist and Pythagorician persecuted for his anti-clerical satires and for his work upon the Scriptures, who was also much too interested in cabalistic Judaism. With the cabala in mind, our author passes on to consider English Platonists, who believed that Pythagoras and Plato had derived some ideas from Moses: Thomas Gale, who dabbled in theurgic mysteries; Cudworth, whose system of "plastic natures" contained much that was false; Henry Moor, a philosophic liberal, but (like Cudworth)

infected with "cabalism" to the extent that he could not appreciate the "corpuscular and mechanical philosophy".

He returns to the Renaissance, from which he dates the rebirth not only of arts and sciences, but also of polite conversation, of the theatre and of refined pleasures of all kinds. Furthermore, he does not fail to mention the far-reaching and revolutionary effects of the invention of printing. In Italy, he explains, three things fostered the Renaissance or made it possible: first the fact that, since the fourteenth century, barbarism had been fought by men like Dante, Petrarch and Boccacio who were Latinists as well as Italian writers; secondly, the protection afforded by enlightened princes; thirdly, the arrival in Italy of cultured Greeks who reproved the ignorance of those they met. Reason re-entered her rightful domain and the thread of truth was joined up again in Western Europe; for, in order to pick up that thread at all, it was necessary to study ancient languages and, after studying them, to think for one's self. Now the Greeks who had come westward after the fall of Constantinople were either Aristoteleans or Platonists, and between these sects new disputes arose. Platonism was gradually eclipsed during the sixteenth century during a process of reaction against the extreme reverence for its founder during the fifteenth, and its place was taken by the philosophy of Aristotle. The papacy of the immoral Leo X encouraged forms of free-thinking - particularly scepticism regarding the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and attachment to the Averrhoist notion of the soul of the world. In 1513 Leo condemned both these philosophic tendencies; yet discussion about immortality and Aristotle's opinions on the subject continued. In sixteenth-century Italy, the foremost participants in the debate were Pomponazzi, who maintained that Aristotle did not hold the doctrine of immortality and that reason cannot prove its validity; who, as a philosopher, taught that there is a single substance in the Universe, but was prudent enough to submit as a "Christian" to the claims of reve-

lation; Nifo, who opposed Pomponazzi and was in fact less virtuous than the sceptic and materialist he fought; Fracastoro, disciple of Pomponazzi, who was wise enough not to "show his hand", even to the extent that his master had done. In general, declares our critical historian, these speculations about the meaning of Aristotle's words are quite vain, since, not regarding the soul as we do, the Ancients tended to believe that all matter is endowed with life. It is religion, he prudently adds, which provides the true proof of the doctrine of immortality. Yet he proceeds to suggest that heathen peoples are able to meet death courageously and even joyfully! As if disputes between Platonists and Aristoteleans and debates about the real meaning of Arisotle's pronouncements were not enough, Lorenzo Valla resuscitated Epicureanism, which he tried to reconcile with Christianity. The misfortunes that befell so virtuous and reasonable a philosopher excite the utmost indignation in our critic.

The Renaissance in Germany is represented first by Rodolphus and George Agricola. Heresies forced a decadent Church to awaken to her true responsibilities. Luther is honoured, partly--for his attacks upon Scholastic influences in education; Erasmus--is treated with singular respect, especially on account of his unwillingness to disturb society by proclaiming truth too openly, and of his regard for virtue and moderation; Philipp Melanchthon, likewise a man of modesty and disinterestedness, is the object of an apology on the grounds that his Pyrrhonism was principally an expression of aversion from dogmatism; Joachim Camerarius is extolled for the splendid reputation he earned for himself in the field of science. The Swiss, Zwingli, is less favourably considered, because of the errors he introduced into religion. Nevertheless, he proclaimed that good works were as useful to salvation as grace, and in that respect is to be accounted a sound moralist.

The Renaissance in England follows. Here once more we sense the enthusiastic approval of our historian, who appreciate[s

the courage of English thinkers and the freedom they have won for themselves. He tells us that the English love reflection, abstraction and truth. In quest of the last of these the whole nation is involved - even the nobility, who do not spurn professional or studious occupations. And, whilst regretting the establishment of Anglicanism, he remarks that English bishops are more learned and more virtuous than their counterparts elsewhere. Elizabeth I is acknowledged as having re-established peace and instituted firm but benevolent rule. In addition, it was under this far-sighted and intelligent queen (and under the reign of James I) that the exact sciences began to be cultivated in Britain. Francis Bacon and Thomas Hobbes are mentioned (the former with considerable reverence) for work in their respective spheres of intellectual activity; and we arrive finally at an unstinted encomium of modern English "philosophy", pursued for the benefit of the state, providing the rules on which law and order are based, and banning the "systematic" in science in favour of experimental method. In truth, declares our admirer, the "philosopher" is the right person to govern or advise!

After a briefer glance at Spain we come to the French Renaissance. If Charlemagne's attempts at culture were not destined to endure in times that were not conducive to learning, the efforts of François Ier (in more enlightened days) were very much more fruitful and the results much more permanent. The great Renaissance monarch prized learning and encouraged education. He himself was interested in natural science. What is more, it was under his rule that the Court became the centre of charm and elegance. Under Henri II the Court continued to flourish, this time, however, tending more and more towards a devotion to gallantry and to pleasure-seeking; and, since in this reign poetry was seen to displace science, Deslandes judges this to be a sign of decadence. In these times there were, however, some names that deserve special mention: Jean Fernel, medical doctor and philosopher; Jules-César Scaliger, a man of undoubted genius, but stubborn in his opinions and

vitriolic in his censure; Guillaume Rondelet, doctor and student of natural history in so far as it concerns fishes. Although he has mentioned him already as a victim of Scholastic intolerance, Deslandes now devotes a special section to Pierre Ramus - principally, we suspect, as the excuse for an attack upon the Sorbonne.

Last of all, Deslandes considers the "New Philosophy", with its revival of rationalism, its repudiation of "authority" and its insistence upon the study of Nature. Descartes is the greatest artisan of this revolution, since he left the well-worn paths to seek truth by using his own reason. Deslandes compares the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and finds that the latter was interested in ideas rather than philology, in taste rather than erudition, in the "Moderns" rather than the Ancients". Such is the reality of progress. Five things (he tells us) contributed to the success of the "New Philosophy": reason re-asserted her rights after "authority" had long arrested man's intellectual advancement; clarity was restored to thinking, since meaning was now considered more important than stylistic elegance and since men learned to doubt until they were sure of the facts; mathematics were introduced into the study of motion, of matter &c; scientific instruments helped to unfold before men's eyes the wonders of Nature; knowledge was conceived not as a mass of separate subjects - but as a splendid unity.

Such is the work that created and maintained the author's reputation in the eighteenth century - a work which is not only a history of philosophy, but which is also laced with critical comment and insinuation. In this fourth part of our study we are considering Deslandes chiefly as an historian of ideas. In the fifth, we shall be concerned much more with Deslandes's own opinions as they emerge from the magnum opus of 1737-56.

b) Deslandes's General Approach to his Material

"Je vais dans le Livre suivant parler de la Philosophie nouvelle, qui regne aujourd'hui", declares the author of the Histoire critique as he concludes the fourth volume (pp. 186-187). But the fifth never reached the presses at all; and we are thus denied his specifically expressed views about doctrines that were held and expounded in the century that separates Descartes from the Philosophes of the Encyclopédie. What, then, may we say of the four volumes he actually published? True to principles announced in the Preface and early pages, he has given us a history not so much of formal philosophy as of diverse aspects of human thought and endeavour. In the process, he has allowed himself the freedom to re-iterate and digress at will, and, despite his pretence at brevity, he has not hesitated to discuss the ideas of some thinkers whose names are difficult to find, even in reference books, and are certainly not to be discovered in modern histories of philosophy. Let us provide one illustration of each of these points. Ramus appears in widely separated parts of the work: in the third volume, when Deslandes is discussing the rehabilitation of Aristotle in the fourteenth century, and in the fourth, when Ramus is accorded a whole chapter in the middle of a review of the French Renaissance. Secondly, under the heading "De leurs inventions en Méchanique", we are not given a scholarly assessment of the importance of Arab inventions: instead, the whole section is devoted to the art of sugar-making, and moreover much more to the modern technique than to that of the Arabs of former times (III, 262-264). Thirdly, it is quite certain that a modern history of philosophy, however complete and however detailed, would hesitate to waste time on such names as Vermigli, Taurellus, Syrianus or Zanchi!

If such names figure in the pages of this short history and if constant digression and repetition are permitted, it

is clear that something of importance must be sacrificed. For instance, it is regrettable that the "brevity" our author cherished should have obliged him to deal so rapidly with Plato and Aristotle, with Protagoras, Plotinus and Parmenides, and with the Fathers of the Church, whilst at the same time he provided such relatively lengthy discussions of the Seven Sages (who are really dealt with twice), the Eleatics, Atomists and Epicureans. Moreover, it is at first sight surprising that Spinozism, which he professes to find absurd, should have been explained in more detail than Cartesianism, which appears to command his respect. This unbalance, foreign to the modern historian (for example Russell) and strange to the reader of to-day, is however readily understood when we consider the general scheme of the work and the motives of its author.

Four "ages" were studied. The first, from the Flood until the time when the Greeks acquired many notions from the Egyptians and Babylonians - an age in which philosophy sprang from reason and from Nature and in which, therefore, barbarian philosophy and pagan religion were inextricably joined; the second, the age of Greek philosophy proper, during which organized systems and sects appeared, and during which were debated those topics that had been found in former thinkers (the origin of the Universe, the workings of Nature and the ultimate destiny of things); the third, extending from the birth of the Redeemer to the close of the Middle Ages, in which long-discussed issues, such as the existence of God, the historically recent origin of the Universe, the Fall of Man, the immortality of the soul and the reality of a Hereafter, were settled for those who cared to hearken to the teachings of Christianity, and yet were obscured by ingenious commentators and disputants; the fourth, extending from the Renaissance to the time of Descartes, during which Nature re-asserted her prerogatives and revelation served to supplement reason, now free to range far and wide within her rightful domain - such is the genral scheme of the Histoire critique.

Yet, to a great extent, it is the pretext for a dual thesis. Despite the initial claim to strict impartiality and the statement that criticism will take account of historical and social circumstances, the author's approach is very much dictated by personal preferences. Above all, the historian is anxious to be useful - useful to man as a human being and useful to man as a member of civilized society. It is this criterion of utility which provides the unity of subject. What indeed is that "fil précieux des bonnes études" (IV, 153) to which he returns time and again? It is the continuity of certain studies that promote social and material happiness. That is the thread he follows in his history of ideas. It is the thread that might have been lost in the Dark Ages if Byzantium had not become the custodian of Hellenic culture. For progress is neither regular nor automatic. As he explains on one occasion: "On voit bien que la Philosophie n'auroit jamais fait aucun progrès, tant qu'on auroit suivi les traces des anciens..." (IV, 180-181). Honour, then, to those men of vision who, however unknown to-day, helped to preserve the thread throughout the ages.

Who, then, are these enlightened pioneers? They belonged to almost all sects and almost all schools of philosophy. These men, "des hommes modérés & attentifs sur eux-mêmes, qui cherchoient à être utiles par les traits d'une Morale épurée, & qui mettoient tous leurs soins & toute leur industrie à serrer de plus en plus les noeuds de la Société" (I,4), are therefore to be judged on their merits as contributors to personal, social and material happiness and progress. That is the basis of the author's assessment of his characters, and that is why he is not unduly impressed by those who left the deepest imprint on the pages of history. In confirmation of this important fact, we note how he presents the eclectic, Potamon of Alexandria, whose method "consistoit à emprunter de chaque Philosophe ce qu'il avoit dit de plus raisonnable" (III, 83). Here is the historian's own comment on this: "J'avouërai ici, que la

méthode introduite par Potamon renferme beaucoup de justesse & de discernement... Quel homme ignore que le vrai doit être reçu, quelque main qui nous le présente; & qu'il faut renoncer à l'erreur, malgré le crédit & la réputation de ceux qui l'appuyent?" (III, 84). Applying this principle himself, Deslandes is willing, for example, to justify both Epicureans and Stoics in Roman times. Under Augustus, a cultured and tolerant ruler, literature flourished along with the cult of voluptuousness: under his tyrannical successors, the honnêten gens found refuge and solace in Stoicism, and thus "se firent une Philosophie conforme à l'état douloureux où ils se trouvoient" (III, 38-41). Since, then "chaque siécle en a une qui lui est propre & affectée, & qui se ressent des manières, des goûts, des travers mêmes de ce siécle" (III, 8), it is wise that the historian should examine now, amid this prevailing philosophy, the cause of truth has been served in each century. Thus, although as a critic he cannot avoid being influenced by the philosophic climate of the first half of the eighteenth century, he hopes that, as a historian of ideas, he will be found to have been sufficiently fair-minded to acknowledge philosophic excellence in other ages, and indeed in all ages. He himself claims to be independent of formal attachments, and, at the outset, refers to himself as "moi, qui ne porte les livrées d'aucun Philosophe, & qui n'ai par conséquent aucun intérêt de trahir la vérité..." (I, xxii). Taken along with the other evidence we have submitted, this furnishes a clue to Deslandes's position as an historian of philosophy.

Discussing the differences of approach between such historians, J.E. Erdmann (Hist. of Phil., ed. Hough, 1890) finds, in the period 1650-1750, three main categories (op. cit., I, 6). First there is the "learned" method, which consists in considering all systems of philosophy equally valid expression of opinion about the nature of things, and therefore in deciding that the historian should provide the most complete set of facts available, and then leave the reader to form his own

judgements. Of this method he cites Thomas Stanley as an excellent exponent. Secondly, there is the sceptical view of philosophies, all of which are regarded as equally inconclusive and incomplete, in that they represent man's groping after truth. This view, which compels the historian to present each system with some reserve, is (he claims) that of Pierre Bayle. Thirdly, there are the eclectics, of whom he cites Brücker, and who, perceiving fragments of truth in all systems, and considering that philosophies reflect the spirit of the age in which they are conceived, assume the responsibility of selecting from each system those elements that appear to contribute to the gradual discovery of truth (op. cit., I, 6,n.). Into this third category (and we admit that these divisions are probably not so fine as Erdmann suggests) falls Deslandes who, as a nineteenth-century critic observes, "ne cesse de recommander, non-seulement l'indulgence, mais la reconnaissance et le respect, pour tous les systèmes et toutes les générations de philosophes qui nous ont précédés" (Dict. des sc. ph., art. Deslandes, p. 63).

Yet the same article continues: "Malheureusement ces principes, ces idées saines et impartiales, ne se montrent guère...qu'à la surface du livre: au fond et dans les détails règne l'esprit du XVIIIe siècle, dont l'auteur subit l'influence alors même qu'il s'efforce de lui résister, et qu'il ne réussit jamais à dissimuler un instant". These two passages underline the problem we have already posed, but which is worth re-stating at this point in more precise terms. As an historian of the "eclectic" school, he must not allow prejudice to distort his judgement - a judgement which, none the less, cannot be divorced from contemporary philosophic ideals; as a critic, he is permitted a personal view of each system under review. That indeed is why - although it is quite impossible completely to distinguish between the two - we have chosen, as far as we can, to consider separately the historian and critic who combine to make up the author of this Histoire critique de la philosophie, "le premier livre de ce genre qui ait paru en France (Dict. des sc. ph., art cit.)3

CHAPTER II DESLANDES AND HIS PRECURSORS

Parmi les Ecrivains de l'Histoire Philosophique, les uns ont ttavaillé [sic] sans choix, sans discernement, plus en compilateurs qui ramassent, qu'en censeurs qui jugent. Ils ont rapporté les pensées des autres, & n'ont point assez songé à penser eux-mêmes...Les autres se sont trop plûs à suivre les événemens de la vie particuliere des Philosophes...Je blâme un zele si excessif...(H.c., ed. 1756 (from which all further quotations are taken), I,pp.xvii-xix).

a) Thomas Stanley

A precursor to whom Deslandes refers four times in the Histoire critique was Thomas Stanley (1625-75). This historian, whose technique (we recall) Erdmann cites as the classic example of the "erudite" approach, was the author of a History of Philosophy, which appeared in three parts between the years 1655-62 and ran into three English editions in the years 1686, 1701 and 1743. Moreover - and the fact is important, since Deslandes does not appear to have been conversant with the English language - it was published in Latin in 1711. Thus the English author's work was available and still being read at the time Deslandes was composing his own critical history.

Now, despite the fact that the History of Philosophy is nothing more than a scholarly assemblage of countless details derived from Laertius, Plutarch, Cicero and other accepted authorities, there are traces of its influence upon the French history. For example, it is from Stanley that Deslandes avowedly draws information regarding the imprecise identity of Zoroaster, whom Stanley too associates with Hercules (v. H.c., I, 220-222) - the difference being that Deslandes carries the matter a step further by insinuating that the Hebraic father of the post-deluvian era, Noah, is also to be identified with Hercules. Secondly, like Bayle and Deslandes, Stanley noted the community of ideas between the Cyrenaics and Atomists, and must therefore take priority over either of these writers. Thirdly, Stanley appears to have accorded to Thales a position of supreme importance as the

founder of Hellenic philosophy. Deslandes is only too willing to follow this lead, since it allows him to stress the fact that a man could be a kind of atheist without losing his claim to greatness as a thinker and a moralist.[4] Fourthly, he draws attention, as Deslandes does so often, to the phenomenon of the "double doctrine" in the history of philosophy. In Stanley's history, this appears most noticeably in his study of Pythagoras, the second ~~most~~ important figure in his cavalcade. There are more general points of agreement: for example, both claim to be tracing the history of thought and the development of knowledge; both claim to have the moral aim of improving by example. These similarities are barely significant, because they are common-places in the history of philosophy; but of the very greatest importance is the fact that Stanley, writing in his native tongue rather than in Latin, was successful enough to have his work appear in two English re-editions before the date of publication of Deslandes's Histoire critique. Certainly this must have helped to tip the scales in our author's decision to turn aside from the accepted language for such works.

Against these points of resemblance, however, we must set the sharp differences that exist between Stanley and Deslandes. These can be reduced to two main distinctions: first, the attitude of each to the problem of detail, and the degree to which each author allows his own ideas to appear; secondly, the arrangement of philosophers and their doctrines. Consider first, then, the problem of detail. Stanley provides very ample documentation concerning the lives and ideas of the philosophers under review; and he retails innumerable anecdotes, fabulous or otherwise, from his sources. In such a presentation, the critical element is reduced to a minimum. Deslandes proceeds quite differently. Consider, for instance, Pythagoras, as he appears in the two histories. In Stanley's account (Pt. IX), we find in the first chapter eight paragraphs devoted to this philosopher's country of origin, paren-

tage and the time in which he lived, and a further six to his education. In all, the first eleven chapters are given over entirely to biographical matters, with numerous marginal references to the sources of information. The eighteenth chapter of the ninth part recounts the wonders associated with Pythagoras - the fact that he was said to have been capable of being understood by an ox; that an eagle descended from the heavens to be stroked by this extraordinary person; that he killed a serpent by biting it. The death of the Greek thinker is considered sufficiently important to require twelve detailed paragraphs; and it is not until we reach the twenty-second chapter that we at last begin to read about his writings.

Contrast with this the thirteenth chapter of the third book of Deslandes's history. To begin with - as if to scorn Stanley's prolixity - he declares: "Je ne m'engagerai point dans aucun détail de Critique, ni sur la patrie de Pythagore, ni sur l'année de sa naissance, ni sur le genre de sa mort. Ce détail seroit plus curieux, qu'utile..." (II, 42-43). For him such "criticism" is irrelevant. We soon learn, however, what sort of "criticism" he deems significant. Very briefly he deals with the education, travels and studies of Pythagoras; but he allows two full pages for a discussion of Pythagoras' experiments with musical sounds, since the method employed is not essentially different from that followed in more recent times[5] - "ce qui prouve plus que tout le reste, l'application constante de Pythahore [sic] aux Sciences exactes..." (II, 47). The supposed contacts between Pythagoras and the Hebrews are treated with some scepticism, and Deslandes asserts that his own century is already dealing successfully with similar conjectures. What he means to suggest here (and what he will continue to suggest many times over) is that the Hebrews were an intellectually isolated people, immured in their own mysticism and out of contact with the splendid evolution of rational thought. He goes on to defend the Greek philosopher against the charge of indulging in magic, and, whilst admitting the

obscurity of certain Pythagorean notions, he stresses the excellence of the Greek philosopher's ethical system - his toleration and his appreciation of those who sought truth instead of wealth. Swayed by the beauty of such noble principles, Deslandes appears anxious to excuse the "faults" of Pythagoras. ~~his subject~~. Thus we read that Pythagorean symbols are the result of Egyptian influences; that the refusal to eat beans was in fact a sound rule of health, comparable with the Jewish ban on the flesh of certain animals; that the statement in Diogenes Laertius to the effect that Pythagoras would rather perish than cross a field in which the hated vegetable was growing is probably fabulous, since only the Jews amongst Ancient peoples were eccentric enough to prefer the formal observance of a religious taboo to self-preservation (as the destruction of Jerusalem shows). Then, coming to the basis of the philosophy (which he declares "rich" in wisdom), he finds something that he has already discovered - in slightly different terms - in Thales, namely the intrinsic animation of matter. In fact this notion of Pythagoras coincides in some respects not only with that of the atomists, but also with ideas of Spinoza, as our author rather pointedly explains in the text (II, 59). Such doctrines are put forward without hostile comment by our critical historian, and indeed such notions as the concert of heavenly bodies and the harmony of the spheres are excused on the grounds that they are illustrative of the occasional aberrations of an otherwise excellent and eminently reasonable person.

Our historian declares: "...j'abrége encore crainte d'ennui" (II, 62), and we must follow his example. By now we have reached the end of the sixth section of Deslandes's review of Pythagorean opinions. There is more in the same vein, but enough has been disclosed to reveal the essential pattern of his criticism, which consists in deliberately "playing down" material irrelevant or harmful to the impression he is giving of a great precursor of modern thinkers. Conversely, it

consists in stressing ideas which he himself, judging from the view-point of the 1730s, finds attractive and reasonable. Consequently, when Pythagoras anticipated modern science, he revealed his true greatness; when he did not, he was guilty of lapses pardonable in one so remote from our own times. (Now this habit of "tossing the double-headed coin" is one with which we are soon familiar as we read the critical history. Yet, as we suggested in Chapter I, protests against partiality are forestalled in the adjective "critique".)

If other examples of Deslandes's treatment of "unnecessary" detail are required, they are not difficult to unearth. For example, on p. 364 of the second volume, Deslandes quotes Stanley as his source. But he has certainly chosen with considerable care the material he uses; for, whereas Stanley recounts (from Laertius) the story of Anaxarchus, pounded with iron pestles in a mortar and spitting his tongue out in the king's face (Hist. of Ph., ed. 1701, p. 469 A), Deslandes, denying us these unedifying details, merely tells his reader that Anaxarchus "fut cruellement massacré sur la route" (II, 365).

Other differences between the two histories are apparently explainable by the times in which they were written. For instance, it can be demonstrated how much Deslandes was influenced by the demands and pre-occupations of his own century. We have already noted that one of our author's self-appointed tasks was that of being a vulgarisateur, and, in the Histoire critique, this sometimes determines his choice of illustrations. Thus, speaking of the indifference to suffering of the sceptics, Stanley tells of Pyrrho's unconcern when Anaxarchus fell into a ditch (op.cit, p. 471 B); but Deslandes, conscious that he is writing for a French public, chooses an incident from the career of Admiral de Coligny to illustrate the point (II, 367-368). Such truths would have had less appeal to the growing reading public if they had not been related to modern experience. In our last part (III) we had many occasions to note that our vulgarisateur was deeply interested in natural science. This

interest too serves to mark a distinction between our historians. Consider, for instance, the "long sleep" of Epimenides as it appears in the two works. Is such a sleep incredible or purely fabulous? If so, we may be sure that the author of the Recueil of 1736 will omit the detail altogether or dismiss it with the disdain it merits. In fact, it is not entirely beyond the bounds of credulity, since "On trouve dans quelques Traités de Physique, des exemples de sommeil prolongé opiniâtrement jusqu'à deux & trois mois" (I, 342). That, the scientific statistic, marks the limit of his credulity; and a sleep lasting for half a century must be regarded as most improbable:

> Mais il est aisé devoir [sic] que celui d'Epiménide a tout l'air d'une vaine chimère. Je croirois volontiers, que pendant les années qu'on suppose qu'il dormit, il se retira dans quelque endroit écarté & solitaire, où il n'eut de commerce qu'avec lui-même, & un petit nombre d'amis d'élite (I, 342-343).

The wonder has been explained away rationally, and the judging-point is entirely modern. Our historian, whose attitude to his material is not unlike that of a journalist, realizes that the business of the vulgarisateur is not only to be brief, to choose illustrations that will awaken echoes in the reader's experience, but also to support his judgements by modern discoveries. This last fact is immediately obvious if we consider Stanley's treatment of the same matter:

> It is reported, that when he was a Youth, being sent by his Father and Brethren to their Field to fetch home a Sheep to the City, Tyr'd with the Heat and Travel in search thereof, he withdrew himself at Noon (or as Apollinus, at Night) from the Common Way into a private Cave, where he slept (according to Theopompus) fifty seven years, according to Varro, Plutarch, and Tertullian, fifty, Pausanas forty, in which interval of Time most of his Kindred died;...Plutarch saith, he awaked an Old Man; Pliny and Laertius, that he grew old in as many days as he had slept years: some affirm he slept not but retired a while, employing himself in cutting up Roots (Hist. of Ph. p. 57 A).6

Certainly there are plenty of authorities quoted; but would that commend the account to any but the learned reader? Certainly there are various possibilities suggested; but what was Stanley's own view of the matter? It is impossible to discover it amid this highly- documented and highly-impersonal presentation of the story.

We turn next to the question of how each historian disposes some of the schools and peoples that appear in his cavalcade. Two sets of facts call for some explanation. First, we note that Stanley in the seventeenth century (and incidentally Brücker in the eighteenth) finds a sort of double source in Hellenic thought. That is to say: he begins with Thales, and then traces his progeny through Ionics, Socratics, Cyrenaics, Megarics, Platonics, Peripatetics, Cynics and Stoics; after which he turns to Pythagoras, from whom he derives the Eleatics, Heraclitics, Epicureans and Sceptics. His arrangement is therefore not strictly chronological, but depends on this assumption of two streams of philosophic thought. In this matter, however, Deslandes is more obedient to what is now considered the chronological order. Second, we note that Stanley omits the Hebrews altogether; and that, whereas his contemporary Brücker accords them a place of honour as being divinely inspired, Deslandes, judging them by the same standards that he uses for other groups, is inclined to find them unimportant. Let us consider each of these points in turn.

The arbitrary grouping which Stanley makes is based on the assumption that "The Italick Sect was distinct from the Ionick in respect of the Author, Place, Discipline, and Doctrine; denominated from that part of Italy, which from the frequency of Greek Colonies, was called Magna Graecia" (Hist. of Ph., p. 346). Deslandes is apparently not impressed by this "distinction": on the contrary he stresses that Pythagoras was influenced by Thales, and that, despite differences between their doctrines, there were basic similarities between, for example, their theories of matter. Both considered that matter has an intrinsic force; but, whereas Pythagoras tended to ascribe this to the activity of God within matter, Thales adhered to a form of atheistic hylozoism. Now it is clear that Deslandes - who in any case found excuses for Greek atheists (II,11) - does not consider this difference of sufficient importance to separate their posterities. That is explained by his concern

for unity and continuity: since his purpose is to trace the thread of ideas running through the history of thought, he is more disposed to stress the similarities than the divergences. Compared with this, the considerations advanced by Stanley (and we observe that in any case he does not agree with them all) are unimportant.

The question of the Hebrews is easily explained. That Stanley excluded them altogether is a recognition of the fact that they were not a philosophic people; that their history is amply dealt with in the Bible; and that to judge them as thinkers would not only lead him on to dangerous ground, but would conflict with formal notions of what constitutes philosophy. That Deslandes mentions them at all proves that he does so with deliberate intent: he is inviting comparisons with the Greeks, to the great discredit of the Jews. For the qualities he esteems most in the Hellenic philosophers are not to be found amongst the Hebrews who "passoient pour les moins polis, & les moins éclairés de tous les Barbares" (II, 225).

In drawing conclusions from the comparisons and contrasts we have made, we repeat that the history of philosophy is not the same thing as the critical history of philosophy, and that consequently Stanley cannot be blamed for avoiding judgements he did not in fact intend to make. Moreover, our survey provides confirmation for Erdmann's remark that between the time of Thomas Stanley and the first half of the eighteenth century the critical element had become an essential part of such histories, and that the purely erudite and objective presentation had given place to a conception in which judgement was a necessary adjunct to the writing of history. Philosophy was no longer the study of ideas and thinkers: in the eighteenth century it was harnassed to the purpose of enlightenment and education, and, as Deslandes was to explain in 1748: "La Philosophie a deux emplois. Le premier est de découvrir par une heureuse adresse de nouvelles vérités, & le second de

corriger sans aucune complaisance les erreurs anciennes" (Ess. sur la mar. des anc., ed. 1768, p. 215). If we accept with reserve the phrase "sans aucune complaisance", we have the two-fold endeavour of the historian of 1737-56. The didactic campaign for truth and against error would have been less effective if the history that embodied it had been less readable. Topicality and brevity are therefore considered important. Indeed Deslandes sometimes uses Stanley as a short-cut to the standard sources, as for instance in the third volume of the Histoire critique, whonhe draws from Stanley information about theurgic notions which, in his turn, Stanley had derived from Psellus and Jamblichus (p. 123). And, although the English history of philosophy could scarcely be regarded as a book for thewider public, it had had some measure of success. Furthermore it first appeared in English; and perhaps the main influence of this work which Deslandes certainly consulted is registered in our author's decision to write in the mother tongue.

b) Thomas Burnet

We recall that, probably in the second decade of the eighteenth century, Deslandes was engaged in analysing Burnet's Telluris Theoria Sacra (1680-89) and the ninth chapter of the Archaeologiae Philosophicae (1692). We remember, moreover, that certain details of the Mazarine MSS were to be echoed in the Histoire critique de la philosophie. It remains, however, to demonstrate how far the author's interest in the ideas of Burnet (and, if we may be allowed to make an appropriate interpolation, the ideas of Boulainvilliers, whom we also mentioned in connection with the English writer) influenced the historian of philosophy in more general ways.

In 1737 Deslandes refers to "Ce systême de Thomas Burnet qu'ont adopté d'excellens Philosophes..." (H.c., I, 50). As we have already discovered, one such "philosopher" was the Comte de Boulainvilliers, who, having once served as a link between French thought and the ideas of Thomas Burnet, will now do so again. In her massive study of this writer (whose death occurred seven years after that of Burnet), Miss Simon has analysed the conception of history that emerges from his works. This conception she regards as prophetic of Voltaire's "philosophy of history". If we may say so without appearing to play on words, that conception also forms part of the back-ground necessary to the study of Deslandes's history of philosophy. We note, for example, the broad principles that governed the writing of the Abrégé d'histoire ancienne:

> J'aurai une attention particulière à faire connaître l'histoire des moeurs, des opinions et des religions des différents peuples de la terre. Je marquerai autant qu'il me sera possible l'origine des arts, des cérémonies et des usages chez toutes les nations (cit., Simon, R, Henry de Boulainvillier [sic], historien politique, philosophe, astrologue, p. 49).

Similarly, Deslandes's history is intended to demonstrate

> "Le progrès des connoissances humaines..., l'établissement des principales Religions en chaque pays..., les différens goûts qui ont succédé les uns aux autres, soit dans les moeurs, soit dans les sentimens, soit par rapport au commerce ordinaire de la vie" (H.c., IV, Avert.). "L'histoire a deux faces, elle nous montre le bien pour l'imiter, et le vice pour le détester", said Boulainvilliers in his Lettre à Mlle. Cousinot (cit. Simon, p. 53): and again:

> Ces rois qui de leur vivant ont dominé impérieusement à la terre sont...placés au-dessous de nous. Leur conduite est soumise à notre examen, et l'histoire, prise en cette manière, loin de se laisser éblouir par leurs grandeurs passées, les condamne, ou comme des méchants, ou comme des poltrons, ou comme des tyrants et des sangsues pour leurs peuples. Quelquefois aussi, elle les loue...ces sortes d'exemples sont les plus rares(ibid, p. 53).

"Cette Histoire", chimes our author in the Avertissement we have just quoted, "renfermera...le détail des vertus & des vices qui ont triomphé dans chaque siecle, des emeutés, des injustices qui s'y sont commises, les noms des Rois équitables & bienfaisans dont la liste est si courte & les noms des Tyrans &

autres mauvais Princes pour en inspirer l'horreur". Surely, then, we must not be misled by the claim that Deslandes goes on to make: "Cette Histoire, si je ne me trompe, aura quelque chose de neuf & de singulier"; for some aspects of his historical method were already to be found in the work of Boulainvilliers, many of whose historical writings were published by this time.

But, if Boulainvilliers furnishes some interesting general parallels, the English author whose Sacred Theory appealed so much to the Count when he composed his Abrégé d'histoire ancienne must stand as a much more important influence upon the author of the Histoire critique de la philosophie. Four years before the publication of the first edition of this last-named work, there appeared yet another Latin reprint of the Archaeologiae Philosophicae, testifying to the continued vogue enjoyed by a book which seems to have owed some of its appeal to the fact that the churches were shocked by its presentation of the Hebrews; that the author was consequently dismissed from the post of Clerk to the Closet to William III; and that his cause was espoused by such avowed infidels as Charles Blount. In free-thinking circles such events only served to enhance the author's reputation. In the same way the continued interest in the Theoria Sacra is demonstrated by the appearance in 1726 - eleven years after the author's demise - of an English translation executed some years before by Burnet himself, and described as the sixth edition. (Indeed, further editions were to be published well into the nineteenth century). These two works, then, could hardly be ignored by continental free-thinkers, and, even if our author had not already applied himself to their study, he would probably have taken them into account in preparing his critical history.

What we have said is particularly true of the Archaeologiae Philosophicae sive Doctrina Antiqua de Rerum Originibus (1692), the full title of which draws our attention to it as a possible source of the Histoire critique, as it had been of parts of

Bayle's Dictionnaire critique (e.g. art. Loucippe, Rem. A). Of course, there are of necessity significant differences between a learned work, composed in Latin, and a piece of vulgarisation, however critical its nature. One has only to glance at the account each author gives of cabalistic philosophy. Burnet's exposition is impressively documented with Latin, Greek and Hebrew illustrations of the points he makes: compared with this, Deslandes's treatment is brief and even superficial. There are differences too in the importance which each work accords to the critical element - for it would be a mistake to assume that Burnet's history is purely factual, and in fact his critical tendencies are evident in the arrangement of civilizations and philosophies which he makes to show the continuity of ovalid thought throughout the ages. We recall that Deslandes too is intent upon demonstrating this continuity; but in his work there is much more incidental criticism, in the form of digressions and "asides" many of which have topical significance. Two examples show the slightly different approach of the two writers: first, Burnet does not, as Deslandes does, use a discussion of Egyptian philosophy to demonstrate the attributes of a good and virtuous ruler; secondly, when both quote the identical passage from Plutarch to justify what they say about the "Grand Year", the English historian passes on immediately to other matters, but our French critic detains his reader whilst he scourges religious impostors, charlatans in medicine &c. (Arch. Phil. ed. 1728, pp. 13-14; H.c., I, 238-240). Such dissimilarities, inherent for the most part in the nature of the two works, pale into significance beside the evidence of influence, which we shall consider under the headings of: disposition of material (and chronology), cosmogony, the secular approach, and textual similarities.

It will be remembered that, in the case of Thomas Stanley, the arrangement of philosophers and schools was not strictly chronological, but arbitrarily divided to demonstrate the existence of two streams, springing from Thales and Pythagoras.

Burnet and Deslandes, however, claim to be tracing a single development, referred to in the first case and the "pure liquid stream", and in the second as the "thread". It is therefore for a definite purpose that they stress that Pythagoras followed the ideas and counsel of Thales, and that it is particularly for his cosmological notions that he is to be accorded the second place of honour in the general plan. This regard for the exposition of a thesis entails a consequent suppression of material considered irrelevant. Thus Burnet tells us that he is leaving aside tedious biographical detail in order to concentrate on ancient opinions about the nature of things, and upon the "seed" and flowering of human knowledge. He proclaims: "...quae historiam literariam constituere solent, qualia sunt philosophorum vitae, natales, obitus, laudes, peregrinationes, benè aut malè gesta, & hujsmodi plura, complent haec quidem, ornant-que materiam; sed minoris sunt momenti, cùm id agimus, ut humanae cognitionis semina & progressus...investigemus" (Arch. Phil., Pref, p. vii). In stating this at the outset, he does not mention Thomas Stanley, but it is not improbable that he has him in mind. It is indeed to the credit of Burnet that, despite the learned nature of the book as a whole, he appears aware of his reader. Thus he interlards the text with such remarks as "At long last we come to..." and frequently brings the topic under discussion to an abrupt conclusion with "But we have said enough on this matter". Deslandes's reader is conducted with the same consideration for his patience, and the Avertissement to the final volume establishes without doubt the fact that the author has wished to be brief in his expositions.

Some idea of the rapidity with which both deal with schools and sects can be gained by glancing at the respective tables of contents. But something much more revealing awaits, for the ordering of these contents is strikingly similar in the two works - so similar indeed that little doubt may be entertained that Deslandes composed the first volume of his history (as he admits, for instance, in writing p. 75) with Burnet's book open before him:

Burnet (Arch. Phil., most of Bk. I)	Deslandes (H.c., most of Vol. I)
Ch. I The history of phil. conceived as complementary to the Sacred Theory	Ch. I Origins and primitive conceptions of phil.
Ch. II Strabo's division into four races. Discussion of three of these: Scythians Celts, Ethiopians	Ch. II Strabo's division into four races. Discussion of three of these: Scythians, Ethiopians, Celts
Ch. III Indians, Seres (Chinese &c), Brhmins	Ch. III Indians, Brahmins, Seres, Phoenicians, Persians and Arabs
Ch. IV Assyrians and Chaldeans	
Ch. V Persians and the Magi	Ch. IV Chaldeans and Egyptians
Ch. VI Arabs and Phoenicians	
Ch. VII Hebrews and cabalistic Judaism	Ch. V Hebrews and cabalistic Judaism (interpolation of Burnet's ideas of Creation and Deluge
Ch. VIII Egyptians	Ch. VI Interpolation of ideas re. formation of Earth
Ch. IX Fabulous philosophy of early Greeks. Orphics	Ch. VII Fabulous philosophy of early Greeks. Orphics

Modern chronology would not accept the order observed either by Burnet or Deslandes.[8] Instead it would assert the possible priority of Chinese, Phoenicians and Babylonians. Conversely, Scythians and Brahmins would probably be relegated to a later position. But we repeat that we are in any case dealing with theses rather than with formal history, and that therefore some latitude must be allowed on that account as much as for the fact that ideas of chronology have progressed in the past two hundred years. What is really significant is that the two arrangements are roughly parallel. Where they are not we have to seek some explanation. Now, by his own admission, Deslandes claims the freedom to alter the order in the cause of demonstrating the development of his now familiar "thread". Why does he change the sequence of the first three of the four primitive races adopted from Strabo by Burnet? Because in the Preface he has declared that the history of philosophy should appeal particularly to those who would "suivre le fil

précieux des découvertes ajoutées les unes aux autres" (p.iii). Why does he group together Indians, Persians, Chaldeans and Egyptians, and in that particular sequence? Not, as the article Deslandes of the Dictionnaire des sciences philosophiques would have us believe, because he is ignorant of chronology. Let us hearken to what he himself says by way of elucidating this very point: "Cet ordre n'est point arbitraire ni de caprice, comme on pourroit le croire; j'ai tâché de le conformer aux différentes liaisons de pensées & de découvertes que ces Peuples ont eues les uns avec les autres..."(I, 81). It will not have escaped the reader that Burnet's disposition of peoples appears to have been guided by the notion that the movement of civilisations was from the Far East to the Middle East, and thence to the Mediterranean. Apparently he did not find that this conception conflicted with his principle of following the "pure liquid stream". However, adopting the last-named principle, Deslandes has applied it more rigorously than his model, and this for reasons that will be clearer in a moment.

First, however, let us note the place accorded by each writer to the Hebrews. Both depict the Hebrews as intellectually isolated; yet they demonstrate this isolation in slightly different ways. Anxious to separate them from the Greeks (who were superlatively valid philosophers), Burnet interposes the Egyptians between the two. Equally anxious to treat them as being outside the vital stream of constructive endeavour (which, in the religious sphere, means nothing more than ethical superiority), Deslandes puts them before the Greeks and immediately interpolates long discussions on barbarian cosmogony, with the intention of showing that the Jews, with their Book of Genesis, were neither alone nor outstanding in this field. Consider, for example, the motive that impels him to mention these facts, drawn from Burnet's Sacred Theory:

"De-là sont venus les Ouvrages des anciens Auteurs connus sous le titre de Théogonie ou de Cosmogonie, & qui n'étoient autre chose que l'Histoire de la Naissance du Monde, décrite & paraphrasée (

sous les noms & les emblèmes des Dieux. Tous les Poëtes Philosophes ont compose de pareilles Théogonies ou Cosmogonies..." (I, 293). Cosmogonies were common amongst Ancient peoples: Genesis is but one of many. Is it the work of a highly scientific people? Is it the work of a nation that excelled in philosophy? On the contrary, these Hebrews who "se sont toûjours plû à feindre des Ouvrages extraordinaires, & à les remplir d'une infinité de miracles & de traits surprenans", contributed nothing to the magnificent culture of the Greeks:

> Il est vrai que Josephe & quelques Peres de l'Eglise assurent positivement que Pythagore, Platon, Aristote, ont puisé toute leur Philosophie chez les Juifs; & que leurs dogmes ont une forte teinture de la doctrine sacrée. Mais sur quoi se fondent & Josephe & ces Peres de l'Eglise? sur des Ouvrages constamment faux, & supposés par des Juifs Hellénistes (II, 226-227).

They could contribute nothing to Hellenic culture because they were outside the normal "stream", sanctimoniously disdainful of their fellow-men:

> Attachés à leurs rits & à leurs coutumes, exacts à la pratique de leurs loix, soigneux de ne point donner à leurs enfans une éducation différente de celle de leurs peres, ils n'avoient aucun commerce avec les étrangers, qu'ils regardoient par principe de Réligion [sic], comme des impies & des gens souillés...après cela, faut-il être surpris si les Philosophes Grecs ne se hazardoient point d'aller à Jerusalem...? ils en étoient détournés par les mêmes raisons, qui les attiroient à Memphis & à Babylone (II, 225-226).

Instead, he tells us that the Greeks derived all their ideas from barbarian philosophers. And who were these barbarians? He defines them quite clearly, and in a manner that shows the reason for the particular arrangement in the first volume, to which we referred a short while ago. From the Phoenicians the Greeks acquired knowledge of the arts of navigation, commerce and of writing; from the Syrians, they derived religious ideas; from the Egyptians and Chaldeans, philosophy, ethics and jurisprudence (I, 279). This is a logical, "natural" order, proceeding from useful arts to literature, philosophy, morals and law. And it is of the utmost significance that, in this chain of constructive and useful knowledge, the Hebrews do not contribute a single vital link.

If this be true of literature, philosophy and the rest, how much more may it be said of the Hebrews as scientists.

We learn from the Histoire critique that "pour la Physique & le détail immense qui lui appartient pour les diverses parties de l'Histoire Naturelle, il est certain que les Hébreux n'en avoient aucune connoissance" (I, 175). Turning back a few pages we read: "On ne doit point faire parler Moïse, David ou Salomon, comme auroient parlé Galilée, Copernic, Gassendi, Descartes ou Malbranche [sic]....on ne peut bâtir aucun Système de Philosophie sur l'Ecriture Sainte. Tout y répugne à l'expérience: tout y combat ce que nous appercevons de la Nature..."(I, 169-172). Anyone familiar with Voltaire's Dictionnaire philosophique will immediately perceive that Deslandes had said in 1737 what Voltaire was to say in the article Juifs: "Vous demandez quelle était la philosophie des Hébreux: l'article sera bien court: ils n'en avaient aucune....Dire que les Egyptiens, les Perses, les Grecs, furent instruits par les Juifs, c'est à dire que les Romains apprirent les arts des Bas-Bretons. Les Juifs ne furent jamais ni physiciens, ni géomètres, ni astronomes" (Oeuv., ed. Mol., XIX, pp. 519-521). In judging thus, both writers were guilty of "philosophic" prejudice against the age-old tyranny of the priest; for even if the Jews were not pre-eminent in science and philosophy, they surely did occupy a central position in history as guardians of monotheism and indeed of righteousness. Yet, although Deslandes occasionally and grudgingly acknowledges this, he repeatedly presents the contrary argument with such force that he hardly does the Hebrews justice. We suspect—that it is above all the tyranny of the Bible that he detests, and the tyranny of the religion that drew its texts from the Old Testament as well as the New. Perhaps, however, we can find some excuses for this bias in an age when the Church had become especially obnoxious to men of moral principle. Again, we may perhaps excuse both Deslandes and Voltaire as technicians, since both were in a mood of reaction against the type of history that was inspired by pious conformity. Thus Noyes says of the author of the Essai sur les moeurs: "His chief criticism of Bossuet is the central position that he gives to

the Jews in history; and he complains that the Indians and Chinese have been obliterated by this preference" (Voltaire, ed, 1936, p. 452). We have seen, however, that long before this Essai Deslandes had registered a similar protest by restoring the Indians and Chinese to their rightful place, and by relegating the Hebrews to a humbler station in history.

We pass on to the question of cosmogony. Considerable time has already been devoted to the MSS analysis of the Sacred Theory and the "Doubts and Objections", which appear as blue-prints for certain passages in the first two volumes of the Histoire critique. For instance, the author of this work ends a discussion of "colonnes sçavantes" with a remark about "le monde primitif & original", maintaining that "celui que nous habitons n'en est qu'une copie foible & défigurée", which " n'offre que des ruines, des débris & des décombres" (I, 31) - a view in harmony with those of the author of the Sacred Theory. Again, in the same volume, he gives a substantial quotation from that work to show that notions regarding the priority and excellence of northern antediluvian nations as discoverers of useful arts and ethical principles are not without modern support. He begins his extract with these words:

> Ces conjectures auroient toujours passé pour des jeux d'imagination, sans la peine qu' a pris un célebre Anglois de leur donner un air philosophique. Cet Anglois est Thomas Burnet, qui a eu si long-tems la direction de la Chartreuse de Londres, & dont tous les Ouvrages offrent quelque chose d'original (I, 48).

And, having explained as fully as space allows (and it will be found to be one of the longest quotations in the entire work) Burnet's theory of the primitive Earth, the original situation of the Terrestrial Paradise, and the enormous disturbances to the Earth's symmetry at the time of the Flood, he comments: "Ce système de Thomas Burnet...se démontre de deux manieres, ou par des preuves physiques, ou par des preuves tirées de l'Histoire ancienne" (I, 50). Could there be clearer proof of our author's enthusiasm for Burnet's cosmogonic theories (to which, we recall, he appeals once more in 1750)? The reason

for this enthusiasm soon becomes clear, for our author proceeds to advance confirmatory evidence amassed from geological observations and other scientific data drawn from the Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences.

Another fact that emerges from the passages we have just considered is that, instead of claiming in 1737 (as he did rather surprisingly in the MSS) to have found a way of reconciling Burnet with Genesis, he draws attention to a barbarian people who anticipated modern scientific discoveries. Thus it is not the Jews but the Scythians who are credited with knowledge of this northern antediluvian civilization - yet another example of his denigration of the Hebrews. Indeed, it is now becoming increasingly evident that his attachment to Burnet's ideas (noted by the Bibliothèque raisonnée, Vol XX, Avril-Juin 1738, p. 272) fits into a plan of campaign against the traditional and hallowed superiority of the "Chosen People". Burnet did not, in fact, reconcile scientific conjecture with the Bible. His critics were quick to point this out. Instead, he effectively revealed the inadequacy of the Mosaic account by demonstrating, for example, that Genesis is not the story of the whole Universe, but merely of our world:

> Deux Auteurs Anglois qui ne se sont pas contentés des notions communes, l'un est Thomas Burnet, & l'autre Guillaume Whiston, ont aussi avancé que le premier Chapitre de la Genese ne contenoit que l'Histoire de la formation de la Terre, & non du reste de l'Univers qui subsistoit déjà (I, 230).

H.C.

Indeed a few pages further on Deslandes indicates the similarity between Egyptian and Phoenician notions on the one hand, and those set forth in Genesis on the other, suggesting that the former were "imitated" from the latter. It does not escape our notice, however, that in the arrangement of his first volume the Phoenicians and Egyptians precede the Hebrews! His object in quoting Burnet's Sacred Theory was therefore to demonstrate that, in scientific and intellectual matters, the Hebrews were a backward race.

Our study of the secular and rational approach common to both authors hinges also on this fact. For instance, at the

very beginning of the Archaeologiae Philosophicae, Burnet announces that he has made reason and "Nature" his guiding principles (p.1). Of course, he is careful to apologize in advance for mentioning the sacred writings, which he originally intended to leave aside, but which presented themselves as evidence and could not therefore be ignored (pp. 1-2). Nevertheless he judges them and their authors by the same standards he applies to all the Ancients. What are those standards? The Preface to this Latin work makes it clear that he is concerned to show how the Ancients, in different ways and in varying degrees, anticipated modern knowledge, especially in the scientific domain (pp. viii-ix). As in the case of Deslandes, it is this touchstone that determines most of his comments on the Hebrews. We recall that our author depicts them as an isolated people. Burnet explains that Pythagoras and Plato did not seek out the Jews, precisely because they did not shine in the subjects that interested them: "Notum est vero disciplinis Mathematicis aut Philosophicis nunquam praecelluisse hanc gentem, neque in caeterarum artium studiis, aut id genus ullo humani ingenii eximio foetu" (p. 59), and, at the end of the book, he returns to a judgement that he too has often made: "Neque scientia naturali, neque Mathematica, celebres fuere Hebraei..." (p. 267). It is not surprising, then, that the French author who had studied the Archaeologiae should have headed one of the sections of his critical history "Que les Juifs n'ont jamais passé pour un Peuple sçavant" (I, 174)!

Finally, although the sections devoted to the Hebrews supply such striking evidence of the secular approach common to Deslandes and Burnet, it would be a mistake to assume that this nation alone are judged in this way, for both are quick to condemn the "miraculous" in traditional and fabulous accounts. Consider, then, the case of the Scythian, Abaris, who is reputed to have journeyed through the air on a "magic" arrow. How is this detail treated by each author? Burnet

warns his reader to be sceptical in such circumstances: "Sed cum multae fuerint artes magicae, & Magiae species, apud priscos, non omnes pro Philosophis habendos esse censeo qui eas exercuerint" (p. 8). Deslandes echoes this comment, but with more disgust and impatience: "Voilà les puérilités que Porphyre & Jamblique rapportent en termes couverts & mystérieux; & c'est les réfuter, ce me semble, que de les exposer brievement aux yeux du Public" (I, 42-43). Neither has any use for "old wives' tales", whether they be in the Scriptures or in ancient historical sources: both of them are critical historians, and both insist upon using their reason.

The final, conclusive proof of the influence of the Archaeologiae on the Histoire critique is found in the texts themselves.— For example, it seems more than coincidental — that the third chapter of each, which starts with a discussion of Indian philosophers, should begin with these phrases: "Hactenus multas terras sine magno fructo percurrimus...", and "Nous avons jusqu'ici parcouru beaucoup de terres ingrates & stériles...". Let us consider, secondly, the order of details in these two passages concerning the Assyrians, bearing in mind that in neither text are sources indicated:

> Quorum erat primum Imperium magnum, quod fidem meretur, in terrarum orbe, post Diluvium. Idem etiam populi inter antiquissimos numerantur qui literas & sapientiam coluerunt,— primaque Schola publica imperialis in Babylone, hujus monarchiae metropoli, statuitur; permansitque ad tempora Nebuchadnezaris magni, & Prophetae Danielis (Arch. Phil. p. 25)

> La plus ancienne Monarchie dont parle l'Histoire profane...est celle des Chaldéens ou Assyriens...ils ne laisserent point de cultiver les Arts & les Sciences...Ils établirent même des Ecoles publiques à Babylone, qui étoit la Capitale de leur Empire, le centre de toutes les affaires; & ces Ecoles... durerent—jusqu'au tems de Nabuchodonosor & du Prophete Daniel (H.c., I, 125).

As a third, and final example, here are some passages on the subject of the Druids:

> Volunt quidem nonnulli à Pythagorâ derivatam esse hanc gentem Philosophorum, ob cognatas opiniones & modum vivendi non dissimilem...Neque dubito Druidas fuisse ex antiquâ progenie Sapientum, non Graecanicâ: quos Gallorum Magos, more Orientali, appellat Plinius (Arch. Phil., p. 11).

> Quelques-uns veulent que Pythagore ait inspiré aux Gaulois le premier goût de la Philosophie; mais tout s'oppose, tout répugne à ce sentiment. Il y a plus de raison de croire que les

Celtes ont emprunté beaucoup de Dogmes des Orientaux...D'ailleurs, Pline nous assure qu'on donnoit aux Druïdes le nom de Mages...(H.c., I, 73-74).

Some of these resemblances could perhaps be attributed to a common source. Yet Burnet is usually scrupulously careful to admit indebtedness; and, what is more, in the examples given here only Pliny is mentioned, and by both historians. The first example would lead us to suppose that Deslandes had actually translated Burnet at this point, and the other two are worthy of note because of the components and the order in which they appear.

Briefly, then, we may now assess the influence of Burnet on Deslandes.[9] First, it would appear that the English author furnished the general plan of the first volume of the Histoire critique; secondly, that when the French historian departs from the plan of his predecessor, it is probably the more effectively to demonstrate the single development of constructive philosophic thought, and thus to accomplish Burnet's avowed purpose more completely. Thirdly, that if we discount Deslandes's more critical presentation and allow Burnet a more erudite, but neither tediously detailed nor completely uncritical treatment of his theme, that theme is found to be the same in both cases. Fourthly, that since (as we recall) Burnet's portrayal of the Hebrews shocked English churchmen, Deslandes was delighted to follow the earlier historian in excluding that people from the "pure stream" of those who evolved sound notions and made useful discoveries. Fifthly, we have noted that we may well assume some textual similarities as well, and we suggest that these confirm the supposition that the first volume of the Histoire critique was planned with the Archaeologine open on the author's desk or close at hand for reference. Finally, we have noted with interest the space devoted to the propagation of Burnet's "scientific" explanation of the Creation and Flood. In this respect, we repeat, the Histoire critique embodies and continues the unpublished MSS work at present in the Mazarine.

c) Pierre Bayle

If Burnet is to be accounted an important influence on the author of the Histoire critique, Pierre Bayle must be placed equally high on the scale. Yet these two influences operated on slightly different planes; for, whilst the author of the Archaeologiae had offered the French historian a connected account of the progress of thought, Bayle's famous Dictionnaire historique et critique of 1696 could hardly do that. On the other hand, Bayle's approach to his material is even more significant than that of Burnet; and, expressed quite briefly, the facts are that, whilst from Burnet Desiandes drew much of his theme and plan for the first volume, from Bayle he derived his basic criteria - the supremacy of ethics over metaphysics; the superiority of inductive and a posteriori over deductive and a priori methods - factors which determine the whole presentation of the Greek philosophers in the second volume of the critical history - a volume which is in some ways the most important of all.

Under the article Spinoza (Rem B) of the dictionary, Bayle refers to the doctrine of Foë, the Chinese sage, who, though an atheist and materialist, expounded a number of sound moral principles. These details about Foë (acquired by Bayle from Lecomte's Nouveaux Mémoires de la Chine, and later partly reproduced by Desiandes in the Histoire critique and, later still, in the article Athées of the grand Encyclopédie (ed. 1751, I, p. 800 A)), are provided to show that an estimable ethical system can be evolved quite independently of Christian theology. Again, in the article Arcésilas, Bayle considers that the true principles of morals are not to be found by metaphysical speculation, and that, like other sciences, the science of ethics is related to judgements based upon observation. ~~That judgement is certainly present~~ Thus man can distinguish between good and evil as he distinguishes between black and white; and it is essential that he should do so, for

upon this ability depends his capacity for social advancement. Deslandes takes his cue from his precursor. For him also ethics represent "la seule Science qui nous est utile & qui de plus est à notre portée; tout le reste étant trop éloigné de nos yeux & n'ayant avec nous que peu de rapport, & pou de proportion" (H.c., II, 130). Like Bayle, Deslandes is interested in the practical application of philosophy. "L'apparence et la pratique, pour Bayle, enferment tout le positif de la science et tous nos intérêts en cette vie", declares Delvolvé (Religion, critique et philosophie positive chez Pierre Bayle, ed. 1906, p.253): in the manifesto that constitutes the Preface to the three-volume edition of the Histoire critique, Deslandes writes: "...la Philosophie n'est point une doctrine de pure spéculation, & seulement à l'usage de [sic] Lycée, ou de l'Académie. Elle influe peu à peu sur les moeurs, & par conséquent sur toute la conduite de la vie...A quoi serviroit donc la sagesse, si elle n'étoit une compagne, une amie fidele, & de toutes les heures?" (I, x) Thus the ethical value of any system of philosophy becomes one of the touchstones which, like Bayle, our author uses to assess the worth of ideas he considers in his book.

Observe, for instance, how this criterion motivates his appreciation of the Greeks. What does he esteem most in Thales? As well as his rudimentary scientific notions he prizes that thinker's ethical principles. Indeed, far from being repelled by the materialism of Thales, Deslandes appears anxious to conclude (as Bayle so often did) that atheism can be compatible with virtue (v. Bayle, Pens. sur la Com., CLXXIV), with toleration, with benevolence and with intellectual modesty. Truly this is a silent plea for the practical effectiveness of lay morality in the case of an intelligent man; for the atheism of Thales is represented largely as the expression of a private hatred of superstition, which none the less concedes the value of supernatural beliefs to keep the common people in check.

We pass on to the Socratics. Why does Deslandes paint

so flattering a portrait of their master? Chiefly, we must conclude, because "tant de raisons engagerent les Anciens à le regarder comme le premier Auteur de la Morale..." (II, 130). Thus we find him warmly enthusiastic about the character of the great philosopher and the ethical system that reflects it: the insistence that virtue alone can promote happiness; the humble-sociability and that moral courage which Deslandes so resolutely vindicates against detractors; the persuasive moderation with which the Ancient encouraged the honnêtes gens to follow in his own foot-steps; that refined gallantry which was but one facet of the philosopher's cultured humanity. --- Indeed, it is an image of the character and ideals of Deslandes himself, but an image that is much magnified. We note, moreover, how he deals with the celebrated private "demon" of Socrates. Had he wished to decry the Greek thinker, he would undoubtedly have seized upon this to confound him: instead he eagerly tells the reader that the "demon" was a mere fiction invented to divert the populace. Nor should we overlook our author's treatment of that disciple of Socrates and founder of the Cyrenaics, Aristippus. For surely what he praises in this case is the modesty of the honnête homme, expressed in aversion from dogmatism, and (conversely) in the stress that Aristippus laid upon such ethical ideals as t make for man's present contentment - emancipation from the fear of death and from the evil power of superstition; regard for that form of voluptuousness which promotes mental tranquillity and physical well-being; and, though, as we have said, he is perhaps even more enamoured of the ideals of Epicurus in respect of these desiderata, he is none the less highly appreciative of those of Aristippus which tend to coincide with his own.

Again, as we follow Deslandes in his review of the Eleatics, atomists and Epicureans, precisely the same pattern emerges. He approves of the Eleatic form of scepticism, which is so like that of Bayle; but it is when he approaches Epicurus and his disciples that Deslandes finds least to

criticize. True he judges the clinamen absurd, but of the character of Epicurus and of his ethical principles he is openly enamoured. For ethical excellence was the goal of this Greek apostle of the honnête homme; and Deslandes visibly enjoys telling his reader of the refined hedonism of his Greek master; of his calm resignation to realities (such as the reality of death); of his resolve to follow's Nature's way in preserving from degeneration the mind and body; of his sterling integrity and noble simplicity. For Deslandes this is what makes a truly "great man" (II, 361).

This presentation of the character and ideas of Epicurus recalls most vividly the article Epicure in Bayle's dictionary. Note U denounces the clinamen; notes I, M,N and O are concerned with rehabilitating the much misunderstood and maligned philosopher, particularly in respect of his noble principles and virtuous behaviour. (Note S incidentally provides a substantial amount of Deslandes's report of the "diversité d'opinions sur l'origine du monde".) Note T, which begins conventionally enough with a "refutation", proceeds to recount an imaginary dialogue between Epicurus and a Christian priest, who, since he appears to have the worst of the polemic, is finally obliged to maintain that, if Providence cannot be justified on rational grounds, it has value in keeping the masses in check. This Note T leads us back to the Histoire critique, and to a passage (partly indebted also to Bayle's note N of the same article), in which Epicurus' attitude to established religion is explained, and which shows that, in one respect at least, Epicurus and the Christian priest shared common ground: "...il recommandoit sans cesse de se prêter aux cérémonies publiques & aux actes imposans de la Religion, quand même on n'en seroit pas pénétré au fond du coeur...Ces cérémonies, continuoit Epicure, servent principalement à entretenir la paix & la douceur parmi ceux d'un même pays..." (H.c., II, 346-347). Epicurus, who, whilst secretly rejecting theology in favour of ethics, respected organized religion, is the supreme hero of Deslandes, "un peu plus qu'indulgent

pour les doctrines morales d'Epicure" (Dict. des Sc. ph., art. Deslandes). But if this man of wisdom is favoured above all the rest, his precursors and his disciples are high on the list: the Ionics, the Socratics, the Cyrenaics, the Eleatics, the Epicureans themselves - these sects are treated with deference, because they helped to evolve a humanly acceptable ethic. Deslandes judges pragmatically; for nothing is dearer to his heart than that men should seek happiness by banishing fear and superstition, by cultivating the tranquil mind and by savouring pleasure in moderation.

Let us now turn to the reverse of the medal, observing what our historian seeks to disparage in his history. Arid metaphysical reasoning, rigid dogmatism, the arrogant pretensions of religious fanaticism, the uncompromising and austere demands of asceticism - these he cannot endure; and a glance at some of the philosophies for which he shows disapproval or downright contempt discloses the extent to which ethical considerations influence his opinion. To digress from the study of the Greeks for a moment, let us consider once more his attitude towards the Hebrews. Despite a number of remarks made for the sake of prudence, there is no doubt that he treats them with disdain. Indeed he depicts them as inheritors of much ~~superstitious~~ pagan nonsense; as the inventors of that most despicable example of ecclesiastical mumo-jumbo, the theosophic Cabala; as the authors of a "holy" book, the very essence of their so-called "philosophy", derived from, and seldom improving upon barbarian models; as a nation signally ignorant and superstitious even in times of prevalent ignorance and superstition. Of the Jewish sects he reviews, only the Essenes are treated with any degree of sympathy, and then, we suspect, because they resemble some of the Greek sects he holds in esteem. For it is by no means true that he has an equal regard for all aspects of Greek thought. For instance, he views with disfavour Pythagorean metaphysics, which evolved an obscure mysticism; he scourges the Sophists, because "Une vanité insupportable les forçoit de parler sans aucun

égard de tout ce qui se peut sçavoir: & comme ils le faisoient d'une maniere ambitieuse, & avec un grand étalage de paroles, ils mettoient de leur parti le plus grand nombre, qui décide ordinairement, & décidé [sic] sans goût" (II, 127). Such popularity was never to his taste. He obviously detests the Cynics, because of a repulsive and fanatical moral austerity; and, with less venom, he pronounces a similar judgement upon the early Stoics. The Platonists—metaphysicians par excellence—are represented as mystic idealists, the influence of whose ~~posterity~~ descendants upon nascent Christianity was clearly harmful. The ethics of Aristotle also are not wholly esteemed, and this for the now familiar reason which Deslandes explains quite lucidly at this point: " La Morale est sèche & infructueuse, quand elle n'offre que des vûes générales & des propositions métaphysiques, plus propres à orner l'esprit & à charger la mémoire, qu'à toucher le coeur & à changer la volonté" (II, 273).[12] Furthermore it will be recalled that he is especially opposed to Mediaeval Scholasticism which, being involved so much in a priori notions about substances, modalities, entities and the like, was incapable of offering anything but the most sterile of ethics.

These, then, are some of the philosophers he presents in an unfavourable light. He does so, we repeat, because he has no use for dogmatism, for mysticism, for a priori reasoning and for pure logical speculations. It is the judgement of a historian, unawed by tradition and authority, pre-occupied with practical and present considerations, and influenced by Pierre Bayle. Moreover, it is a judgement which coincides with one that, writing to Frederick in the same year as that ~~of the publication~~ of the first edition of the critical history, Voltaire makes of the science of metaphysics, which he claims to be mainly useless since it contains "...deux choses: la première, tout ce que les hommes de bon sens savent; la seconde, ce qu'ils ne sauront jamais" (Lettre du 17 avril 1737, ed. Mol. XXXIV, p. 249). The result

of this reaction, which from the point of view of eighteenth-century "philosophy" started with Bayle, was the continued eclipse of metaphysical studies almost throughout the century and until the renaissance of interest in an early nineteenth-century revival of idealism.

We have examined one of the important touchstones used by Deslandes in his approach. It now remains to take account of the other. Now, at the time of publishing his Histoire critique, Deslandes had already established a reputation as a writer on scientific subjects. In fact, we remember that, the year before his main work appeared, he had been popularizing the Newtonian method and had shown his acquaintance with the chief scientific advances of his age. It is not surprising, therefore, that the critical history should be coloured by this interest, which is revealed in two principal ways: first, in his preference for those thinkers who, employing primitive inductive methods and taking account of the facts of experience, offered explanations to fit observed phenomena; secondly, in his sympathies for those philosophers whose theories of cosmology, physics or astronomy turned out to be prophetic of later discoveries. In this standpoint he is much confirmed by Newtonian ideas, and, with the attraction theory clearly to the fore, tends to favour hylozoists at the expense of animists.[13]

In the first volume of the Histoire critique, the author refers his reader to Borrichius and to the principle "que tout ce qui a été découvert d'utile dans les siecles passés, se trouve dans le nôtre, & que ce qu'on a négligé méritoit de l'être, ou a été remplacé par des inventions plus brillantes" (I, 90). With this notion of the "survival of the fittest" in mind, let us return to the Hellenic philosophers. The Ionians postulated a sort of universal energy and the intrinsic force of matter. For example, if we regard Heraclitus' basic principles of fire as universal energy described in a

figurative manner, we see that he anticipated modern theories. Similarly Anaxagoras, conceiving the fundamental sameness of material structure and interpreting the processes of origin and decay as a mingling and unmingling of ultimate elements, anticipated greater scientists. In particular, his Homoeomeria are considered by Deslandes not out of harmony with Stahlian phlogistic notions which, in 1737, still ruled supreme in chemistry and which, in 1736 (Recueil &c. p. 3), Deslandes himself had coupled with Newtonian physics to discredit Cartesian science. Similarly again, the Platonic view of matter (derived from Egyptian sources) is approved in 1737 on the grounds that it anticipated the gravitation theory (II, 248-249). Even the Pythagoreans, some of whose quaint metaphysical notions our author disdains, must be given credit for having evolved an astronomy not very different from that of the eighteenth century, and certainly prophetic of Copernican cosmology. The natural gravity of atoms, asserted in Democritus' Cosmogony, was echoed in the attraction theory, and the fact that Epicureans and atomists accepted the existence of the void was an excellent reason for paying them tribute on this score. The clinamen, to which we have already made reference, was a very different matter. Invented originally to explain the movement of comets, it would not stand up to modern scientific scrutiny. On the other hand, the idea that motion can be transmitted by the rebounding of atoms is partly confirmed in Newton's optics. These atomists were also right in supposing the plurality of worlds, for if atoms and space are eternal and the world is not, we must allow the existence of other possible worlds. Above all, the atomist philosophy is the one that most completely fits observed fact and accords with Newtonian theories, which Deslandes does not hesitate to declare superior to those of Descartes because they are more explicative of data gained from experience and experiment.

On the grounds of modern scientific theory, then, Deslandes shows predilection for hylozoists, dynamists and

atomists. Equally he disapproves of those whose notions are not confirmed by modern science - or, if we return to the notion of Borrichius, those whose notions have not stood the test of time. Plato, the animist, is criticized several times for building a cosmology which, though ingenious, appears far from scientific; and both Pythagoras and Plato are taken to task on the issue of metempsychosis, which, being a typically animistic doctrine, is regarded as fundamentally unsound, since it could only result from the conception of a soul self-contained before incarnation - a belief founded on pure speculation. Though many have considered him to be the opponent of animism and though in some ways he exhibited a little of the scientific attitude, Aristotle is upbraided for his lack of clarity and from sometimes departing from a posteriori principles and methods. In Deslandes's assessment, then, he occupied a sort of mid-way position, receiving praise for glimmerings of the right method and castigation for inconsistency and obscurity. We remember that the author of the Réflexions sur les grands hommes qui sont morts en plaisantant deemed Gassendi the finest of modern thinkers. This is reflected in 1737 in the fact that both Plato and Aristotle are allotted less space than one would expect them to have. For, having pointed out the defects in Aristoteleanism, Gassendi had chosen to resuscitate Epicurus, rather than the more obvious alternative, Plato. He had done so because he himself was interested in the advancement of natural science, which owed little or nothing to the Platonists, but much to the Eleatic physicists and to Epicurus and his followers, who, almost alone in Antiquity, had tried to reduce phenomena to laws drawn from Nature and to bring observation to bear upon those phenomena. Thus ~~his~~ preference for the atomists shows Deslandes to be not only the disciple of Gassendi (and incidentally of Bayle too), but also the partisan of that sound scientific method and atomist philosophy favoured in the Recueil of the previous year. And superlatively this predilection is

demonstrated in the sympathetic and lengthy presentation of the system of Epicurus, which, "ami des observations précises, et..., se référant sans cesse aux faits, ne recourait jamais au surnaturel pour expliquer la nature" (Pintard, Le lib. er. I, 151).

In both the respects we have noted Deslandes is biassed. He is influenced by his age, which increasingly preferred the utilitarian to the theoretical, the ethical to the metaphysical, and which was increasingly infected with materialism. Under the impact of ideas of Spinoza, Locke and Newton, for example, Cartesian distinctions between body and soul were giving place to forms of hylozoism and to notions of "thinking matter". Thus there grew up a race of materialists who

" were concerned to show that matter consists not merely of inert solid particles, capable only of moving under the influence of external forces; but that it is rather endowed with intrinsic powers of activity, of which thought and feeling are special developments" (Mc Dougall, Body and Mind, ed. 1911, p. 98). And if he was affected by the climate of his times, he was also affected by the bold lexicographer who had helped to form that climate in France; for, as Delvolvé points out, bias in favour of ethics and a posteriori methods was to be discerned in Bayle also:

...la même méthode critique fournit aussi à Bayle des bases d'information positive sur les questions dont elle dépossède l'autorité religieuse et le raisonnement à priori.

Aux dogmes théologiques et métaphysiques sur la nature de l'être et l'origine de l'univers, Bayle substitue de simples hypothèses, qui se recommandent par leur accord avec les lois observables des phénomènes, c'est ainsi qu'il incline à adopter l'hypothèse de l'atome animé comme étant la plus explicative par rapport à l'ensemble des lois de la nature.

Les questions morales sont l'objet de son attention toute particulière, et il leur cherche des solutions indépendantes de tout le système théologico-métaphysique du gouvernement providentiel du monde, des commandements divins, du libre arbitre, de la grâce, de l'immortalité et des sanctions éternelles; des solutions naturalistes et sociologiques, suffisantes pour la pratique humaine (op. cit., p. 426).14

This extract raises issues which will not be dealt with at this stage of our study; but it also points to the fact that, though Bayle's dictionary could hardly furnish a plan, it certainly provided Deslandes with the two touchstones on which he tested the "validity" of Greek philosophy.

CHAPTER III DESLANDES, HIS CONTEMPORARIES, AND THE INFLUENCE OF THE CRITICAL HISTORY

N'aurois-je pas eu encore bonne grâce d'imiter l'Allemand Bruckerus, & d'offrir au Public un volume circonstancié de le Philosophie cabbalistique des Hébreux & des Juifs? (H.c., IV, Avert.)

...l'autre s'approprie les connoissances qui y étoient répanduës, & se contenta, pour les déguiser adroitement, de leur donner un air de liaison & de système. Les Savans sont bien sujets à ces sortes de larcins (H.c., III, 6).

"Pour ce qui est en particulier de l'histoire de la philosophie, on peut dire, si l'on fait abstraction du lourd et superficiel Deslandes, que Diderot en est, en France, le créateur", declares a modern authority on the Encyclopedists (Hubert, Les Sciences sociales dans l'Encyclopédie, ed. 1923, p. 327). The adjectives "lourd et superficiel" are not perhaps unjustified in this comparison; yet, if our author was admittedly not an accomplished stylist;[15] if repetitiousness is only too frequent in, and wit almost entirely absent from the writings of Deslandes, it must also be stressed once more that the "superficiality" (which the author prefers to call "brevity") sprang from a desire to reach a non-professional public. All the same, such a work - the first of its kind in France - could not escape the notice, and of course the strictures, of the professional reader. In 1756 the four-volume edition appeared. Nine years later, the article Philosophie of the Encyclopédie mentioned the native work almost as an after thought with a fuller reference to a Latin work with an identical title, composed by the German, Brücker. As this casual treatment betokens a greater respect for the foreigner who was not a vulgarisateur, it is important that we should investigate the two histories, and then reach some conclusions about the French historian's relationship with the Philosophic Party,

between whose views and his own there should, on the face of it, have been complete accord.

a) Johann Brücker

At the time of Brücker and Deslandes it was common-place to reject "systems" and to proclaim one's intellectual independence. So, just as Stanley had been erudite and uncritical in his approach, the two eighteenth-century writers were prepared to find some truth and some validity in almost all the doctrines they reviewed. Both were eclectic historians. That, however, is one of the few points of similarity; for the differences are much more evident. These differences arose partly from the men themselves. Deslandes, the naval executive, was also a free-thinker, whose claim to independence may therefore be taken at face value in matters of religion: on the other hand, it is important to remember that his German rival was a Protestant minister, first at Kaufbeuern and later at Augsburg. Then, their respective attitudes to the "sanctity" of erudition was almost bound to be different. Typically Teutonic in his thoroughness and regard for detail, Brücker consulted annals, recounted speeches of considerable length, provided numerous biographical details, all of which he squeezed into what finally became six ample volumes. As we have already seen, however, Deslandes's relatively rapid survey left no room for displays of erudition. Indeed, the range of their enquiries was necessarily dissimilar. For Brücker did not hesitate to bring in the Saracens, the Japanese, and even - as a final coup de force - the North American Hurons. Not that in so doing he exceeded the limits of his presciption, since in the Dissertatio Praeliminaris it is stated: "Nobis itaque cuibus historiam philosophicam universo suo complexu considerare constitutum est..." (Historia Critica Philosophiae, ed. 1767, I, p. 11). If one speaks of "universal" history, then of course Japanese and Hurons are part of the panorama. But, we recall,

our French critical historian appears anxious to trace the "thread" of constructive thought chiefly through the forbears of modern European man. That is why he reserves the right - "suivant mon goût & mes idées particulières", as he explains in 1756 (H.c., IV, Avert.)- to chose and to concentrate upon those whose ethical system or scientific notions had bearing upon eighteenth-century civiligation. Consequently, their conceptions of the usefulness of the history of philosophy were rather different also. Brücker's six quarto volumes were not likely to be read outside learned circles. Indeed, his history does not appear to have immediate or considerable sales in France, for example. The second volume of the Encyclopédie describes it as "peu connu en France" (p. iv); and the Mémoires de Trévoux of March 1754 say of it: " Il a fallu plusieurs années pour la faire entrer dans le commerce général & facile de notre Littérature. Ce sont cinq énormes Volumes Latins [the sixth had not yet been added], tout remplis de discussions sérieuses. La foule des Acquéreurs ne se porte pas vers ces sortes de Livres..." (with J. des S., Amst., pp. 187-188).[16] On the other hand, Deslandes, writing in French and hoping to "exciter tout le monde à rechercher la sagesse, à se nourrir de ses préceptes, à suivre généreusement ce qu'elle enseigne" (H.c., I, p. xl), produced a work which ran into five editions by 1786. Of course, both claimed that they desired to be "useful" - Brücker, by virtue of exhortations to study true wisdom, which he considers will promote the happiness of the human species (Diss. Prælim., p. 7); Deslandes, by the stress placed on ethics, upon the Epicurean "douce morale", which allows a man to be virtuous and reasonable, and yet to be sociable and enjoy the good things of life (H.c., I, pp. xiv-xv). No doubt, moreover, Brücker considered that if a limited public were encouraged by his history to seek true wisdom, society as a whole would ultimately benefit from the enlightenment of its leaders; but, influenced by Fontenelle and by Bayle, the French historian was spreading

the net much wider, by providing a course of "philosophy" which, since it discredited metaphysics and dry logical formalism, was calculated to suit the ever-increasing reading public. Truly in this sense, as in many others, Desbordes was a precursor of the Philosophes. His very conception of "philosophy" was wider and more catholic than Brücker's. For example, the German historian insists that philosophy is a definite and distinct science, of which he hopes he has found the measure. On the other hand, Desbordes refuses to define at all a word that takes in so much:

> La Philosophie est la science de la signification la plus noble, & en même-tems la plus étendue. Tout est presque assujetti à ses judicieuses loix dans la République des Lettres: tout relève de son empire, ce qui paroît même devoir le moins en relever...Qu'on ne s'attende pas ici à voir définir la Philosophie: toute définition seroit au-dessous des idées générales qu'elle inspire (H.c., I, pp. 1-11).

In thus refusing to do so, our author appears to have fallen into the error he imputes to Aquinas: "il manque à ce qu'elle [method] a de plus essentiel, je veux dire, qu'il ne définit rien" (ibid, III, 280); yet it takes Diderot many paragraphs of the Encyclopédie to arrive at a definition which is extremely wide indeed. And if the attitudes of Brücker and Desbordes were different in respect of "philosophy", they were still more dissimilar in respect of religion. The Protestant clergyman sees the hand of God behind the development of philosophy: "Qua ratione ab ipsis nascentis mundi initiis ad haec nostra tempora, quibus philosophia per Dei beneficium ad summa culmina surrexit, historiam quandam philosophiae condere licebit" (Diss. Prael., p. 11); and he treats as cases apart those who were held to have been inspired from on high. For, as the Mémoires de Trévoux (od. Amst., Mars 1754, pp. 190-191) pointed out, the author of the Historia Critica Philosophiae does not apply his rational standards to Moses, Abraham or Joseph, who were guided by divine revelation. On the contrary, with pious deference he accords to these holy men of the Hebrews a place of distinction in the post-diluvian era, giving them priority, for instance,

over the Chaldeans. It is apposite that we should recall at this point how Deslandes deals with these fathers of Judaism. He relegates them to the fifth chapter, placing them after Arabs, Chaldeans and Egyptians, and daring to state that they never had any claim to wisdom. Is it, therefore, surprising that Brücker and Deslandes did not find themselves in agreement?

Being contemporaries and writing - ostensibly at least - on the same subject, the two were ultimately bound to notice each other's existence. We use the word "ultimately" advisedly, because the first edition of the Histoire critique had nothing whatsoever to say of the German historian, who had nevertheless already published in 1719 a Tentamen Introductionis in Historiam Doctrinae de Ideis and in 1723 his Historia Philosophica Doctrinae de Ideis. It is Brücker who strikes the first blow in the Dissertatio Praeliminaris to the Historia Critica Philosophiae of 1741-44. In view of his own conception of what constitutes philosophy, he naturally takes Deslandes to task on the issue of refusing to define the limits of his subject; and, quoting in Latin Deslandes's own French phrases, concludes that one cannot write the history of something not defined, and that, if one is rash enough to try, the result is bound to fall short of expectations aroused by the title (Diss. Praelim., ed. 1767, pp. 6-7). A few pages later he returns to this "anonymous author, who is acknowledged as being Deslandes":

> ...Anonymus, quem DESLANDES, aliis scriptis notum, esse accepimus, qui nuper historiam criticam philosophiae tribus tomis nobis exhibuit: Verum ille non consultis fontibus sua tantum, literarum ordine in eorum gratiam congessit, qui solidam scientiarum notitiam subterfugientes, superficiaria tantum eruditione superbire cupiunt: hic autem si iis praesidiis, quae ad tantum opus perficiendum requiruntur, fuisset instructus, si ab alienis, quae numero apud eum illa superant quae historiae philosophicae propria sunt et domestica, abstinuisset, si eruditionem in genere cum philosophia non confudisset, iudiciumque adhibuisset in detegenda veterum philosophorum mente cum eloquentiae veneribus, quibus liber se commendat, certans, promissis fecisse satis et expleuisse expectationem merito credoretur (ibid, p. 37).

So Deslandes is chiefly accused of superficiality, and of making distaste for the solid study of philosophers and philosophies; of being guided by too many "alien influences" rather than the true authorities; of confusing ideas with the charm of eloquence, and erudition with philosophy.

Now the French historian considered that these charges should not pass unchallenged and unanswered; and, in the Avertissement to the fourth volume of 1756, he set out to counter them. For instance, he claims that he has tried to give a "digest" of the opinions of the Ancients, not "une "compilation indigeste" like Brücker's history, which shows a singular lack of discernment and of taste - a clear case of "tit for tat"! "Bruckerus a lû sans beaucoup de discernement, & il a écrit sans nulle bienséance", he declares. In his weighty tomes Brücker has piled up facts to the detriment of readability: "plus de la moitié en est d'une diffusion & par conséquent d'une inutilité dont rien n'approche". What is more: the German writer has devoted whole volumes to so-called "philosophies", which are nothing more than examples of superstitious nonsense. The French apostle of brevity and conciseness concludes: "...dût le Bruckerus m'accuser de trop de concision & de brièveté, j'avouerai naïvement que je serois fâché d'en avoir dit davantage; & si c'est à ses yeux un mérite d'être ample & prolixe, j'aime mieux, tout bien examiné, être court & judicieux" - a rinoste not unlike the one he made to the journalist who dared to suggest that he was a disciple of Réaumur.

In the terms of this defence we may perceive the different outlook, and (what is more important) the completely different aims of the two historians. Though, like Deslandes, in the main eclectic and proud of impartiality, Brücker still clings to some seventeenth-century ideals of scholarship. Consequently, nothing short of a monumental work of solid and detailed analysis will do, for the German historian wishes to shine amongst the learned of his day and to be remembered by posterity as a tireless worker in the field he has chosen to cultivate.

One has only to glance at the substantial volumes to see that, from the "modern", utilitarian point of view, Deslandes is justified in his remarks about Brücker's Historia Critica; for, reading through its tedious pages, one pictures the author as a fly crawling over the dome of some great edifice, coming upon pieces of information at each tiny step, but somehow missing the general significance of the structure. But we must also be fair to Brücker. As we have already had cause to observe, of "alien influences" there is indeed abundant evidence in Deslandes's study; and one could hardly recommend it as an unbiassed work of reference for any of the sects treated within its covers. Rather is the Histoire critique de la philosophie typical of its time, but still more typical of its nation, which was demanding a more interesting form of serious literature.

The justification of what we have just asserted is to be found first in the number of editions that appeared before the Revolution of 1789. It is to be found also in eighteenth-century press reactions to the work. For instance, there is the article that appeared in the Bibliothèque francoise of 1737 (XXV, 189-218), and the companion article of the following year (XXVI, 38-65). In these pages, the Abbé Goujet maintains that the Histoire critique will appeal to all but the "vulgaire"- that is to everyone except those who, through moral depravity or intellectual limitations, despise the "philosopher". He, at least, considers that the new history will prove useful:

> Il faut une bonne dose d'esprit Philosophique pour être capable de ces sortes de recherches, dont l'agrément est réservé aux seuls amateurs de la sagesse. Les Philosophes ont donc grand sujet de se féliciter de la nouvelle production, dont Mr. Deslandes vient d'enrichir le Public (XXV, 192).

Six pages later, the Abbé explains that, in reviewing the book, he is chiefly anxious to encourage people to consult it for themselves. He accepts, without adverse comment, the fact that Deslandes has been indebted to Bayle and Burnet, whom he does not therefore class as "alien influences". He makes no accusation of superficiality: on the contrary, approving of our author's treatment of the millennialists, he takes the opportunity of praising the historian's "profundity": "...il

parle du Millenarisme en Savant qui a aprofondi la matière. C'est en général le caractère de Mr. D. dans cet Ouvrage" (XXV, 216). Finally, in 1738, he concludes that Deslandes "répand la lumière & l'agrément par-tout" (XXVI, 62). We turn to another periodical of the time. The Bibliothèque raisonnée of the same year, 1738, is more critical than the Bibliothèque française of some aspects of Deslandes's history. On other matters its views are not dissimilar from those of Goujet. For, whilst finding fault with some features of the style, the journalist notes that "Déjà les Connoisseurs sont applaudi à l'érudition, au goût, & à la noble hardiesse qui caractérisent ce nouvel Ouvrage" (XX, 268); and, in fact, appears eager to defend the French writer against precisely the accusation that was to be made by Brücker:

> Quelques personnes se plaindront, peut-être, que Mr. Deslandes est plus attentif à recueillir des traits historiques & à les orner, qu'à donner une idée précise des opinions différentes qui caractérisent les divers Philosophes dont nous venons de parler; mais leurs plaintes cesseront bien-tôt, s'il jettent les yeux sur les deux derniers Chapitres de ce prémier [sic] Livre (ibid, p. 278).

In other words, Deslandes's explanations of ancient opinions about the formation of the Earth, the origin of man, the nature of matter, and the problem of evil are regarded as the redeeming features of the First Book. Moreover the influence of Burnet is noted without being condemned; and attention is drawn to the author's "submission to Revelation" in the pages dealing with the immortality of the soul - though, admittedly, it is pointed out that Deslandes's approval of Cartesian separation of substances, virtually gives Descartes the advantage over Moses (XXI, 177). The journalist praises the restraint the author has shown in condemning the errors of the Peripatetics, and his impartiality in judging between "Ancients" and "Moderns". Nor does the question of concision escape his notice: for instance, he finds it admirable that the historian should have summarized a conversation between Hippocrates and Democritus (XXI, 407), and thus seconds our author's deliberate brevity and regard for his reader's powers of endurance. Consequently the journalist argues that,

when (to use Brücker's words) the historian "frustr tes the expectations aroused by the title of his work", he is deliberately giving the public what it demands. For example, referring to the treatment of the Byzantine philosophers, he writes: "Mr. Deslandes, qui connoit si bien le goût du Public, n'a eu garde de donner ici des Extraits de leurs ténébreuses spéculations. Il a mieux aimé perdre en quelque sorte de vue le Titre de son Ouvrage..." (XXI, 430). And, at the end of the whole review, he declares:

> C'est ainsi jusqu'à la fin, Mr. Deslandes fait inspirer l'amour de la Vérité & de la Vertu, en attaquant courageusement la Superstition & le Vice. Nous ne pouvons trop lui rendre ce témoignage. Et si quelquefois à d'autres égards il nous est arrivé de critiquer ses pensées ou ses expressions, nous ne saurions croire qu'écrivant avec autant de liberté qu'il le fait, il puisse prendre en mauvaise part qu'on trouve quelques légères taches dans un Ouvrage aussi beau, aussi récommandable /sic/ que le sien (XXI, 433).

We beg leave to quote but one more comment. In this same year, 1738, the Marquis d'Argens (Mémoires secrets de la République des Lettres, Lettre VII, pp. 559-562), whilst reproving our historian for remarks about the famous poem of Lucretius (H.c., III, 25-26), recommends the Histoire critique as being "un excellent Ouvrage, écrit avec beaucoup de sagesse, de hardiesse, & de précision. Il est rempli d'érudition, & ceux qui voudront connoître les sentimens des anciens Philosophes, ne sauroient prendre un Maître plus éclairé, plus impartial, & en même tems plus agréable & plus amusant" (p. 562). With this critique Brücker would have disagreed on most points: we ourselves disagree on the matter of impartiality, of wit and of the exhortation to those who would know the opinions of the Ancients. In consequence, we must conclude that D'Argens and most of these journalists were swayed most by the hardiesse of the author. Nevertheless, we place on record that their general opinion appears to be that, despite defects each critic has felt obliged to reveal, the Histoire critique is recommendable, because it is useful; and that it is useful because it combats superstition and vice and promotes a love of truth and virtue - because, in short, it is the outcome of "une bonne dose d'esprit Philosophique".

"Les Philosophes ont donc grand sujet de se féliciter

de la nouvelle production", says the Abbé Goujet. Did they in fact do so? In order to investigate this important issue, we turn now to their most illustrious representatives, the Encyclopedists.

b) The Philosophes

In the fourth volume of the Histoire critique (1756) there is a passage taken from Francis Bacon, the choice of which will, we suggest, prove rather significant: "Ainsi un Philosophe...doit...former une espece d'Encyclopédie, non par vanité, mais pour être en état d'instruire les autres, après s'être insruit soi-même. La vanité est tout-à-fait indigne d'un Philosophe" (p. 183). Now, in case we doubt the insinuation that is here intended, we should turn back once more to the Avertissement of 1756, to which we have already referred, noting now that it is not only Brücker he is attacking, but the Encyclopedists who have sung the praises of the German historian:

> Pourmoi, si j'osois être d'un sentiment contraire à celui des célebres Auteurs de l'Encyclopédie, je dirois que c'est une compilation indigeste partagée en cinq gros Volumes in-4º plutôt qu'un ouvrage réfléchi..; & quoique Messieurs de l'Encyclopédie assûrent que son ouvrage donne lieu à beaucoup penser, je prendrai, moi, la liberté de leur dire que plus de la moitié en est d'une diffusion & par conséquent d'une inutilité dont rien n'approche.

To this there is appended a note: "Dans la suite de cet Ouvrage, je donnerai des exemples de ce que j'avance ici".

To comprehend the pique disclosed in such remarks, it is necessary to see how the French historian was treated in the early volumes of the massive work of Diderot and his colleagues. At the end of the Discours préliminaire (ed. 1751, I, p. xliv), D'Alembert pays this brief tribute to one of those who "ont procuré...des secours importans":

> M. DESLANDES, ci-devant Commissaire de la Marine, a fourni sur cette matière des remarques importantes dont on a fait usage. La réputation qu'il s'est acquise par ses différens

Ouvrages, doit faire rechercher tout ce qui vient de lui. In other words: without having his name in a list of official contributors, Deslandes is paid a small, formal tribute for his advice on naval matters (even though articles in that field are composed under the reference of Bellin, Censeur royal & ingénieur ordinaire de la Marine). He is not a member of the panel: his contributions are of an ancillary nature. We observe that, in this acknowledgement, Deslandes is not described as the author of the Histoire critique - surely his strongest claim to recognition by the Philosophes of the Party. This omission is, however, partly understood if we turn back to p. xxx of the same Discours, where D'Alembert attacks those who court popularity by treating in the native tongue (instead of that international language, Latin), subjects relating to philosophy "dont la clarté & la précision doivent faire tout le mérite, & qui n'ont besoin que d'uneLangue universelle & de convention". The reason why the Encyclopédie urged the retention of Latin will be discussed later, when we consider eighteenth-century principles of esotericism: for the moment it is sufficient to indicate a secondary motive mentioned immediately thereafter in the text we are reading. Whilst paying respect to Fontenelle (whom he does not actually name), for having been able to "secouer le joug du pédantisme", the writer deplores the feeble imitations of the great vulgarisateur and suggests that the campaign against erudition has perhaps been carried too far (ibid, pp. xxx-xxxi). There is yet another explanation why reference is not made to the Histoire critique ~~is not made~~ in the brief acknowledgement we quoted above; for the opening "gambit" of that work ("philosophy is as old as the World")[17] is refuted by Diderot in the article Antédiluvienne. There, citing Shaftesbury's Essay on Merit and Virtue and refusing to believe in antediluvian philosophy, Diderot declares: "On voit par-là combien est sujet à contradiction ce que dit l'ingénieux & savant auteur de l'Histoire critique de la Philosophie touchant son origine & ses commencemens: Elle est née,

si on l'en croit, avec le monde...!". Here, at last, the magnum opus is named, and its author, though taken to task, is treated with conventional politeness.

In the same volume of the Encyclopédie, however, there is another of Diderot's own contributions which deserves very special study. The article Aristotélisme, without a word of thanks, "borrows" large portions of the second volume of the critical history. In view of the significance of this act of plagiarism, we crave the reader's indulgence for a somewhat detailed comparison of the two texts. From the words "Allez à Athènes" to "interrogations", pp. 266-267 of the second volume of the Histoire critique are reproduced exactly in p. 653 A of the first volume of the 1751 edition; and the same is true of the passage which extends from "La grande réputation..." to "...ou l'Intelligence". At the foot of p. 267 of the earlier text there begins a statement "Toutes ces mésintelligences durerent jusqu'à la mort de Platon..." which continues to the end of that section of the review (p. 269). Now, in the Encyclopédie, the only divergences from the Deslandes text occur at the beginning which reads "Platon en mourant laissa le gouvernement...", and in the phrase "avec celui d'un Héros tel qu'Alexandre le Grand!", which is miscopied (or misprinted) as "avec celui d'un héros tel que celui d'Alexandre le Grand!" (Encl., I, p. 653 B). Thirdly, at the end of this passage, the expression "de s'assujettir toute la Terre" has become "de s'assujettir le monde entier" - presumably a more apt description of the then civilized world. (Encl., I, p. 654 A). Deslandes's second section begins "Dans sa vieillesse...", and Diderot follows him faithfully as far as the direct speech attributed to the Greek philosopher, where the 1737 version "Empêchons qu'on ne fasse une nouvelle injure à la Philosophie" is modified to "Empêchons qu'on ne fasse une seconde injure &c" (ibid, p. 654 A). Accordingly, the next sentence has to be altered: moreover, removing the point after the word "Nature", Diderot has added a continuation of the sentence in question (H.c., II,

269: Encycl., I, p. 654 A). At the end of the second section of Deslandes's chapter on Aristotle, the phrase "En faloit-il davantage...prérogatives" is extracted word for word to appear on p. 654 B of the later work. In section III, which begins at the foot of p. 270 of the Histoire critique, the same fidelity of transcription is maintained down to the title of the work of Gèmusaeus; after which the earlier text prints a full stop, but the Encyclopédie continues after a semi-colon (p. 654 B). Of the fourth section of the chapter on Aristotle only the first sentence appears to have been taken word for word. On the other hand, almost the whole of the fifth section (H.c., II, pp. 273 sqq.) is reproduced on p. 656 A of the Encyclopédie: indeed, as far as "où tout l'art du syllogisme est enseigné", the only divergence occurs in the first sentence. The sixth section of Deslandes's chapter is but loosely paraphrased in the article. Common to both is mention of the work of Vives; and it is interesting to note that once more the copyist has misread his original, to the extent this time of inscribing "Visès" (p. 656 B).

We have already said that there was no acknowledgement. To make matters worse, in the second volume of the Encyclopédie the omission is rectified in such a way as to belittle the value of the theft, and to suggest that material drawn from Deslandes's German rival (whose name is mentioned in the above article) is of greater value:

> L'auteur a crû pouvoir semer ici quelques morceaux de l'ouvrage de M. Deslandes, qui sont environ la dixieme partie de ce long article; le reste est un extrait substantiel & raisonné de l'histoire latine de la philosophie de Brucker; ouvrage moderne estimé des étrangers, peu connu en France, & dont on a fait beaucoup d'usage pour la partie philosophique de l'Encyclopédie...(II, p. iv).

We have used the word "belittle" advisedly; first, because it is misleading to employ the verb semer to describe the plagiarizing of continuous passages; secondly, because we estimate that approximately eight of forty columns of text were taken from the Histoire critique. Nor is there any doubt about the mischievous intent behind the tribute in the second

half of the admission. If this requires confirmation, we shall do well to note that almost the same remarks are printed in the Avertissement of the third volume (1753). "Nous ne citerons plus de tous les endroits attaqués que l' article Aristotélisme," says D'Alembert (p. ix), who proceeds to insist once again that only about a tenth is from Deslandes and that Brücker deserves to be better known. This time, however, the matter does not rest there. The disputed article has quoted from the Historia Critica Philosophiae: in 1753 this pointed commendation is added:

> Cet extrait est sur-tout recommandable par des réflexions importantes qui paroissent avoir été fort goûtées: entr' autres par l'observation judicieuse contre des abus aussi invétérés que ridicules, qui semblent interdire pour jamais à plusieurs bons esprits, & retarder du moins dans plusieurs corps, la connoissance de la vraie Philosophie.

How bitter a pill for Deslandes: a foreign rival's critical history is apparently preferred; yet his own is pirated in the composition of a most important article! As if this were not sufficiently exasperating, his anger was to be kindled again in 1754, when the article Création (ending with the remark: "Cet Article est en grande partie de M. Formey") plagiarized the greater part of its first six lengthy paragraphs from the Histoire critique de la philosophie (I, pp. 178-181, 230-231) - with the omission of the historian's explanation of the tenets of Spinozism. Here indeed were grounds enough for his ironical references in 1756; yet we must feel that it was the Encyclopedists' preference for the tedious erudition of the German historian that annoyed him most.

The question naturally arises: were the Philosophes at all penitent after 1756? Not in the least: in the Correspondance littéraire, Raynal blithely admits on behalf of the Party: "En général, c'est un plagiat, un brigandage perpétuel, et souvent ils volent les auteurs les plus obscurs... On peut appeler cela voler le tronc des pauvres (II, 199). On this principle, Diderot continued to raid the poor-box after the death of Deslandes. For instance, in the article Manichéisme, we note how once more he has transcribed literally,

and without any sort of acknowledgement, whole sentences and whole paragraphs of the Histoire critique. To Bayle he owes much (as Deslandes himself does). For example, at the beginning of the article Diderot makes the same observations as Bayle regarding the antiquity of the doctrine of "Two Principles"; about Scythian, Plutarch and about the fact that the latter was wrong in suggesting that the Greeks and Romans were attracted to the doctrine. In other words, we find material common to Deslandes and Diderot, and we see that the latter is prepared to admit his indebtedness to the author of the Dictionnaire critique, without, as we said, being disposed to mention the author of the Histoire critique. This is the more reprehensible as immediately thereafter we come upon a literal transcript of the Deslandes text: what Diderot says of Jupiter and the urns (the "poetic fiction" of Homer)[18] has already appeared in the same terms in the Histoire critique (I, 266; Encycl., X, p. 22 B); so has the following passage concerning Zoroaster (though Diderot finishes his paragraph in the middle of a sentence of the earlier work). After this, we discover that the author of the article has reproduced some sentences found on p. 261 of Deslandes's first volume; and Diderot's next paragraph (with slight differences) already existed in pp. 262-263 of the same volume. The next paragraph is taken from the beginning of the fifth section of Deslandes's chapter on the "Two Principles" (H.c., I, 266); moreover, pp. 22B - 23 A copy in faithful detail parts of pp. 263 and 265 of the first volume of the Histoire critique. There is one more point of great significance about this article Manichéisme: Diderot has adopted from Deslandes not only historical material but he has reproduced some of our author's critical remarks. For example, at the end of the sentence about Jupiter and the tubs (or "urns"), both works give: "Encore s'il y puisoit également, & qu'il ne se méprît jamais, nous nous plaindrions moins de notre sort"(H.c., I, 266; Encycl., X, 22 B). The

importance of this fact can only be appreciated if we examine the motives that prompted Diderot to incorporate into his articles substantial passage from the work of Deslandes.

Why did the Philosophes view with disfavour the Histoire critique, as compared with the German history? At a later stage we shall suggest political and sectarian reasons for the apparent hostility between the man and the Party - reasons we touched lightly upon in our biographical section; and we have already perceived that, despite the fact that the Encyclopédie is written in French, its authors considered that Latin was the proper language for philosophic writing. Why then, at the same time, did Diderot despoil the Histoire critique for the articles we have already studied, and for Immatérialisme (of which the long paragraph beginning "Comme l'ancienne Philosophie confondoit la spiritualité & la materialité..." (VIII, p. 571 A) is partly derived from H.c., III, 167) and Polythéisme (of which a passage beginning "Mais une chose qu'on ne peut pardonner aux anciens philosophes..." (XII, 962.A) is copied scrupulously from H.c., I, 289-290)? There are surely three main reasons. The Encyclopedists found in its pages rationalism opposed to religious dogma; a preference for the positivist approach to phenomena and universal scientific principles, and a corresponding distaste for pure metaphysical speculation;[19] pleas for the rule of law and also a regard for liberty instead of the arbitrary rule of an absolute monarch. They found eclecticism that was to dominate philosophic studies in the eighteenth century and to be given a new impetus in the early nineteenth. They found something else, of which we can supply an immediate illustration from the article Polythéisme, to which we have just referred. The long transcript from the Histoire critique is concerned with a matter dear to free-thinkers and deists. For instance, we read:

Le Sage, avoue l'Orateur Philosophe, doit maintenir tout l'extérieur de la Religion, qu'il trouve établi, & conserver in-

violablement les Cérémonies brillantes, sacrées, auxquelles [sic] les Ancêtres ont donné cours. Pour lui, qu'il considere la beauté de l'Univers, qu'il examine l'arrangement des corps célestes, il verra que sans rien changer aux choses anciennes, il doit adorer en secret l'Etre Suprême (H.c., I, 289).

If we do not take the first six too literally, the words we have underlined here focus our attention so much upon the techniques not only of Deslandes, but also of his plagiarist, that we must now pass on to consideration of the method of presentation employed by the author of the Histoire critique de la philosophie.

PART IV NOTES

1. Dict. des sc. phil., art. Deslandes finds a stroke of originality about his treatment of Ethiopians, Scythians, Gauls and Celts, "si peu connus alors".

2. In 1738, D'Argens (Mém. secr. de la Rép. des Lettres, Lett. VII, pp. 559-562) is surprised that such a capable critic should be so unfair to this poem, which is in fact "un des plus beaux & des plus parfaits Morceaux que l'antiquité nous ait transmis". Nor does he understand the difference between "délicat" and "agréable" in this judgement of Desl.. Perhaps, he adds derisively, the author of the H.c. would have preferred a book of stirring episodes!

3. The Dict. des sc. phil. (art. cit.) mentions Jonsius (De Scriptoribus Historiae Philosophicae) as a kind of precursor. This is most misleading. True, Jonsius provided Deslandes with a few references acknowledged in the margins of the H.c. (II, 143, 440; III, 47, 99; IV, 95, 134, 157); but there is no evidence that Jonsius influenced the arrangement or inspired any critical comments. Even the Preface of the H.c. betrays no influence of the Ist Bk. of the earlier writing, which also deals with definitions of "philosophy"; and p. xvi of that Preface stresses the fact that Jonsius compiled a list of historians, and was therefore engaged in an entirely different task. A glance at the contents confirms this: Jonsius begins with Homer and proceeds to deal with the comic poets—of Greece.

4. A similar case is that of the Seven Sages. Goujet (Bibl. fr., XXVI (1738), 41-42) notes that Desl. omits Periander, Trasybulus and Pisistrates, replacing them by Cleobulus, Myson and Chilon; and he comments that most people do the same thing nowadays. In this respect Desl. concurs with Stanley. Yet the reasons for the choice he has made are much more apparent. On I, 311-312, he makes it clear that tyrants are not to be classed as wise men, and he frequently imparts lessons by maxim ("Tout gouvernement qui commence par la fraude finit par la dureté").

5. The expressions "harmonic mean" and "harmonic progression" are vestiges of Pythagorean musical notions. v. Descartes, Oeuvres, ed. A. & T., III, 255 & X, 89-141.

6. In his Abrégé des vies de anc. phil. (Oeuvres, ed. 1820-24, XXII, 64-65), Fénelon gives an almost equally uncritical account of the "long sleep", for he is content merely to add: "Ceux qui ne sauroient s'imaginer qu'Epiménides ait pu dormir si long-temps, croient qu'il employa ces cinquante-sept ans à voyager inconnu dans les pays étrangers...". Having compared the two texts, we find no evidence of any other influence of Fénelon's Abrégé upon the H.c..

7. Note, for example, how Desl. criticizes the Opinions attr. to Plutarch: "...il donne le vrai & le faux sans aucune discussion: on ne sçait quand il loue ni quand il blâme, quand il n'est que simple narrateur ou quand il ajoute du sien" (H.c., II, 40). There is none the less something hypocritical about the final remark!

8. Nor indeed did Lenglet-Dufresnoy's Méthode of 1713, which recommended the study of Bossuet (ed. 1714, p. 27) and observed the following sequence: Hebrews, Chaldeans and Egyptians Assyrians, Mèdes and Persians, Greeks and Romans, Church history, Celts &c.

9. We have concentrated on Burnet rather than Whiston, first, because the Mazarine MSS leads us to the former; secondly, because Whiston figures only once in the H.c., and because

his theory of 1696 was generally judged inferior to the earlier theory since his "comet" explained how the Flood may have been raised, without however suggesting how it subsided.

10. In the same year that saw the publication of the H.c., Voltaire wrote to Frederick: "Je ramène toujours, autant que je peux, ma métaphysique à la morale" (Oeuv. XXXIV, 321).

11. cp. Voltaire, Dict. phil., arts. Platon, Sophiste &c, for similar judgements of the effects of Platonism.

12. ibid, arts. Aristote, Roger Bacon &c., in which Voltaire finds Aristotelean metaphysics encumbered with incomprehensible jargon.

13. By "animism" we mean that theory according to which manifestations of life and mind are due to the operation of something of a nature different from that of the body. By "hylozoism" we mean the refusal to distinguish between physical and psychical; and the belief in the notion that all things, including life and mind, are manifestations of one universal energy. Hylozoism is therefore consistent with theories of "single substance" and with pantheism; it is also consistent with monism and Newtonian physics. In Ch. I of Body and Mind Mc Dougall states that the Hebrews were animists, who believed in the ghost-soul; Thales and the Ionians were hylozoists in that they conceived the soul as part of Nature, and thought of all things as manifestations of universal energy. On the other hand, Pythagoras and Plato were animists. Anaxagoras and Aristotle are depicted as occupying a mid-way position, postulating the universal power as reason. The former thought that at death the individual soul ceases to exist, but that the supreme power remains. Aristotle considered survival possible only in universal reason, but he was generally undecided on this issue. The Ancients who rejected completely the immortality of the soul were Democritus (atomist and materialist), the Epicureans and Stoics.

14. cp. Voltaire's tributes to Bayle (e.g., Oeuv., VIII, 477 & XIV, 546).

15. Raynal (Corr. litt., I, 128) tells us that the initial success of the H.c. was due in part to the mistaken belief that it had been composed by Fénelon. He adds dryly: "On lut et on fut détrompé". Voltaire speaks in Dec. 1757 of "...ce provincial Deslandes, qui a écrit d'un style si provincial l'Histoire critique de la philosophie..." (XXXIX, 319); and, in the same year, Fréron, praising the historian's sincerity, undoubted talents and erudition, laments the fact that such fine blooms should be choked with the weeds of a tedious style (Ann. litt., V (1757), p. 158). He none the less confirms that the work "eut beaucoup de succès" (ibid, p. 160).

16. In 1760, when he produced his Abrégé de l'histoire de la philosophie, that Berlin Frenchman Formey (quite naturally perhaps) used Brücker's opus in preference to that of Desl. But the Table des livres in his Principes élémentaires des belles-lettres (1758 & 1763) mentions the critical history of the French author.

17. This notion is from the Preface to Burnet's Arch. Phil. (p. viii): "Ab omni aevo...Gentem humanam, non tantum de summo Numine, sed etiam de Mundo naturali, de Rerum Ortu, & Occasu & Vicissitudinibus intermediis...notitias habuisse...".

18. v. Iliad, tr. Pope, ed. 1857, Bk. XXIV, ll. 663-670:

> Two urns by Jove's high throne have ever stood,
> The source of evil one, and one of good;
> From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
> Blessings to these, to those distributes ills;
> To most he mingles both: the wretch decreed

To taste the bad, unmix'd, is curs'd indeed:
Pursued by wrongs, by meagre famine driven,
He wanders, outcast both of earth and heaven.

Voltaire uses the same Homeric image, and draws the same conclusions as Desl. about the unequal amounts of good an evil (Oeuv., XXXIX, 41). (v. ibid., X, 361)

19. The influence of Deslandes upon Diderot is noted by Ernst Cassirer, Die Philosophie der Aufklärung, ed. 1932, p. 301. Having recognized Diderot's indebtedness to Bayle, Brücker and Deslandes, he claims that it is in Diderot's treatment of Hobbes, Spinoza and Leibnitz that we perceive the "new analytical spirit" (a mere account of opinions is superseded by analysis carried through historically and systematically). Perhaps the contribution of our author to this new spirit is best summed up by the Dict. des sc. phil., art. cit. : the Histoire critique "... ne contient pas seulement les principes sur lesquels repose cette science encore nouvelle; elle nous offre aussi bien des exemples d'une critique pleine de force et de bon sens; elle renferme sur certaines écoles, et sur des époques tout entières, des jugements très-inattendus pour le temps où ils sont prononcés, mais que la science de nos jours ne désavouerait pas".